APRIL

REDBOOK

MAGAZINE

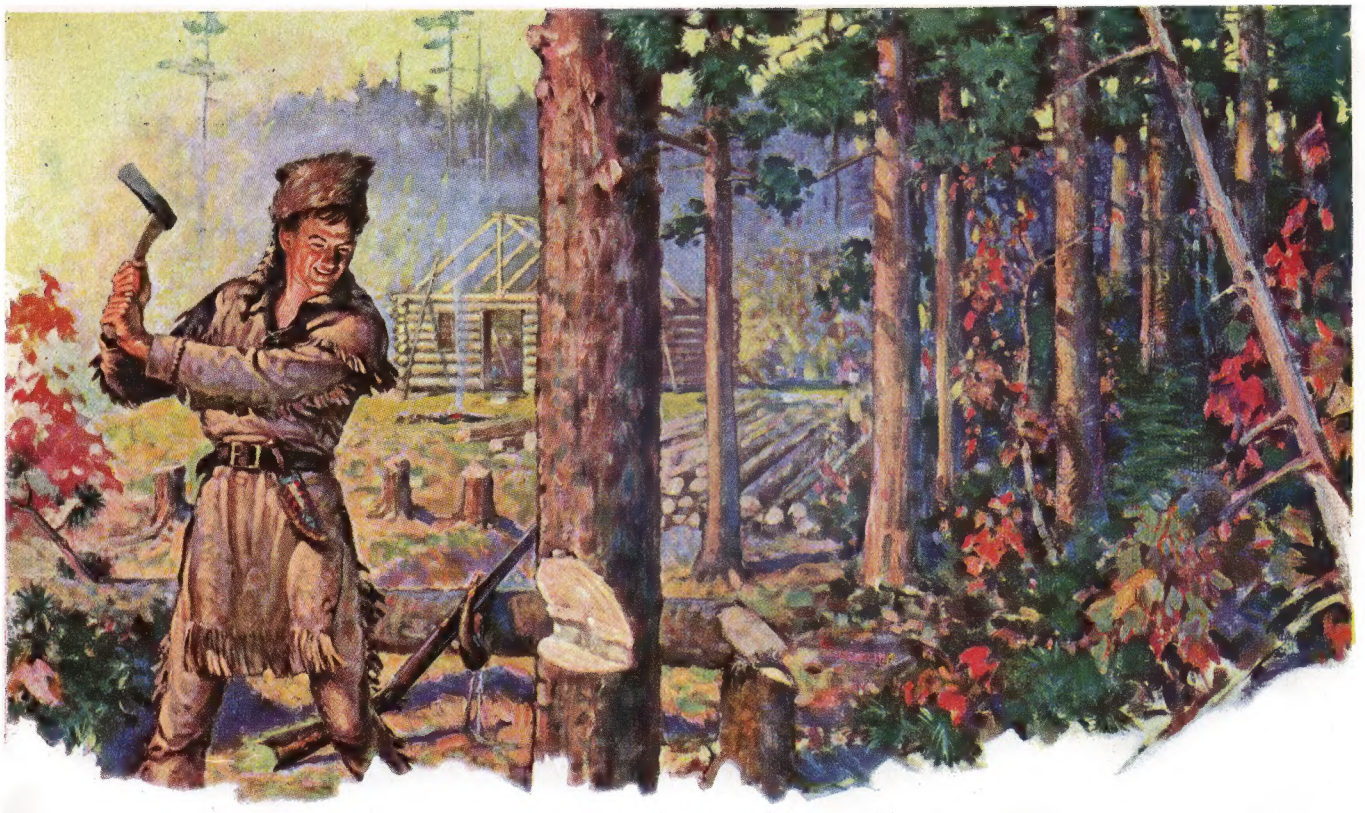
25 CENTS
30¢ IN CANADA

Beginning
"MISS GRAY EYES"
A Novel of This Tremendous Moment

also **FRANKEN MELONEY**
HOWARD SPRING

and
COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL
By **HUGH WALPOLE**

AVERAGE PAID CIRCULATION MORE THAN 1,250,000



Today, you can't find a place to park

A LEAF floating lazily to earth in a sleeping forest. Brilliant patches of sunlight stealing across deep shadows.

The tempo of life so patient that change is imperceptible.

Solitude!

Today throbbing crowds, eager and determined faces, impatient traffic. You can't find a place to park. The pioneer has built a city!

His achievements sprang of ambition. His goal was worth the hard work with crude tools, against merciless odds.

* * * *

Industry today is being challenged to see a *new* goal and reach it. The challenge is being accepted.

America is stepping faster—better ideas, more raw materials, more finished products. Science is doing its share, laboratories are discovering new methods—all in a spirit of determination that will fill the world with wonder. Have we not always been a nation of workmen, with a confidence in our ability to surmount obstacles that only strong men would tackle?

* * * *

People who get results agree that there is no substitute for hard work — that recreation and relaxation are staunch partners of prolonged effort.

In your well-earned leisure, select a beverage of moderation. A tall, stately glass of Budweiser is a standing invitation to make your moments of relaxation complete.

ANHEUSER-BUSCH · · · ST. LOUIS

Budweiser

TRADE MARK REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

A Beverage of Moderation

MAKE THIS TEST

DRINK BUDWEISER FOR FIVE DAYS. ON THE SIXTH DAY TRY TO DRINK A SWEET BEER. YOU WILL WANT BUDWEISER'S FLAVOR THEREAFTER.

COPR. 1941 ANHEUSER-BUSCH, INC., ST. LOUIS, MO.

"Live and Learn, Beautiful... 'Pink Tooth Brush' doesn't just happen!"

"NO, LITTLE ONE—*you've had this coming. 'Pink tooth brush' isn't one of those things Fate just hands out to starry-eyed Oomph girls! Usually it's your own fault.*

"I know you brush your teeth after every meal. But that's not enough—put a little time on your gums too! Now don't get panicked—'pink tooth brush' doesn't always mean serious trouble. But don't you try to decide that!

"Go and see the dentist . . . and do what he tells you to! Don't risk that pretty smile of yours, Sis. And if he suggests 'the healthful stimulation of Ipana Tooth Paste and massage'—obey, little girl, obey!"

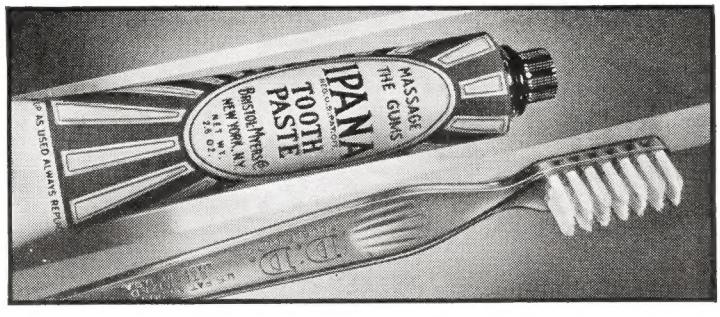
Don't risk "pink tooth brush" —help keep your gums healthier.

It's foolish—sometimes even tragic—to ignore that tinge of "pink" on your tooth brush! The minute you see it—*see your dentist!*

He may simply tell you your gums have become tender ..because today's soft foods have denied them the exercise they need for health. And, like so many dentists, he may suggest "the healthful stimulation of Ipana and massage"!

For Ipana not only cleans teeth but, with massage, is specially designed to aid the gums. Every time you brush your teeth, massage a little extra Ipana onto your gums. That exclusive invigorating "tang" means that gum circulation is improving, helping gums to become stronger, firmer.

Get Ipana Tooth Paste today. Start now the daily use of Ipana and massage . . . for the sake of brighter teeth and a more radiant smile!



Help keep your gums firmer, your teeth brighter, your smile more sparkling with Ipana and Massage.

IPANA TOOTH PASTE

How to burn up your wife!

1 *Bring your secretary home to dinner every night . . .*

2 *Talk about your wife's age in front of guests . . .*

3 *Go in for bulb-snatching . . . Swipe the bulb from her kitchen fixture to light your reading lamp . . .*

But if you want to avoid trouble, please your wife, and cut down on eyestrain, that's easy too! Just get some *spare* G-E MAZDA lamps. They cost less than ever and stay *brighter longer*.

15 and 25 watt . . **10¢**
40, 50 and 60 watt **13¢**
75 and 100 watt . . **15¢**
150 watt . . . . . **20¢**

G-E MAZDA LAMPS
GENERAL ELECTRIC
Made to stay brighter longer

APRIL VOL. 76 **REDBOOK MAGAZINE** 1941 No. 6

EDWIN BALMER, *Editor*
Associate Editors, DONALD KENNICOTT *and* VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN
SID L. HYDEMAN, *Art Editor*

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COMPLETE—BOOK-LENGTH—50,000 WORDS

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Cover: Natural-Color Photograph by Ruzzie Green
Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" Courtesy Limited Editions Club

The short stories, serials, novel and novelette herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence

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Entered as second class matter July 14, 1930, at the Post Office at Dayton, Ohio, under the act of March 3rd, 1879. Printed in U. S. A.

The Redbook Camp and School Directory will be found on pages 110 through 118

"I didn't come here to rock!"

I DIDN'T come here to rock at $15 per day. I came to mix and mingle, to laugh and live in the Florida sun, to wave goodbye to work and worry. So far, no score for Mabel. *And so I rock.*

I didn't come here to rock. I came to swim and sun with new adoring Adonises . . . but they're out with other girls. *And so I rock.*

I didn't come here to rock. I came to dance the hours away in the moonlight with a man . . . the MAN I might be lucky enough to meet and maybe to marry. Well, I met him . . . and he's out tonight with Thelma. *And so I rock.*

Am I slipping? Am I breaking up at 27? Maybe . . .

Still, my hair is nice; my eyes are good; I walk without crutches; I still have all my teeth. I've got a figure to match Eleanor's, a bathing suit to go with it, and three evening gowns that are a little bit of Heaven right here on Earth. I've got a "line" that men like. I even have my own car. Yet here I sit and rock while romance reigns around me and the moonlight mocks me. It's never happened to me before and every time the rocker creaks, it seems to ask: "How come? What's wrong . . . How come? What's wrong . . . How come? What's wrong . . ."

Take This Tip

Perhaps, Mabel, yours is that unfortunate trouble that puts so many otherwise attractive people in the wall-flower class—halitosis (bad breath).

The insidious thing about it is that you yourself may not know when you have it, and so can offend needlessly.

Perhaps all you need to get back into the swim is a little Listerine Antiseptic now and then, especially before a date. This amazingly effective antiseptic and deodorant quickly makes the breath sweeter and fresher. Thousands of popular people, fastidious people, simply wouldn't be without it. It's part of their passport to popularity . . . and it should be a part of yours.

Mouth Fermentation

Listerine works this way to sweeten breath: It overcomes fermentation of tiny food particles in the mouth . . . said by some authorities to be the principal cause of odors; then overcomes the odors themselves. Other cases of bad breath may be due to systemic conditions; to get at the causes, see your doctor.

Get in the habit of using Listerine Antiseptic night and morning, and between times before business and social engagements. Keep a bottle handy in home and office; tuck one in your handbag when you travel—it pays.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., *St. Louis, Mo.*

Let LISTERINE Look After Your Breath

The METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER'S LION'S ROAR

Published in this space every month

The greatest star of the screen!

"Daddy, do you remember 'The Ziegfeld Follies'?", said Little Cub, looking up at us with large leonine eyes.

★ ★ ★ ★

And, reaching back into the haunted wings of the New Amsterdam Theatre, we were launched on the bedtime story of those nights of stars provided by the memorable Flo.

★ ★ ★ ★

Soon we worked our way to the chapter wherein M-G-M immortalized "The Great Ziegfeld", and we drifted naturally into the glamour story of 1941:

★ ★ ★ ★

THE ZIEGFELD GIRL

★ ★ ★ ★

For many moons Robert Z. Leonard, the director, and Pandro Berman, the producer, have been studding the stars in a cluster designed to give the Aurora Borealis second billing.

★ ★ ★ ★

As Tony Martin softly sings "You Stepped Out of A Dream", which is Public Melody No. 1, you will step into a dream of glorified girls—of Hedy Lamarr and Lana Turner.

Romance, in a beaming web, is spun around the personal problems of a guy played by James Stewart, the last three letters of whose name typify his work. Give up?

★ ★ ★ ★

And Judy Garland! Words fail us.

★ ★ ★ ★

Lush, plush and splendiferous, this Eyeful Tower gives us a hall of fame for a cast.

★ ★ ★ ★

For in addition to Garland, Stewart, Lamarr, Turner and Martin, there are (to name but a few) Charlie Winninger, Ian Hunter, Jackie Cooper, Edward Everett Horton, Philip Dorn, Felix Bressart, Eve Arden, Rose Hobart, Al Shean, Dan Dailey Jr., Paul Kelly, Mae Busch, Fay Holden, Ed McNamara and Girls, Girls, Girls, Girls.

★ ★ ★ ★

Settings by Gibbons, Gowns by Adrian.

★ ★ ★ ★

Magnificent! Glamorous! Mighty!

★ ★ ★ ★

THE ZIEGFELD GIRL

★ ★ ★ ★

Glorifying the American lion.

—*Leo*

Advertisement for *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures*

NEWS ABOUT REDBOOK

Miss Lucille Casey of Newark, New Jersey (left), makes her first appearance on our cover. Miss Katherryn Hernan (right) of Dallas, Texas, is a repeater; she has graced our covers three times before. In real life, the two girls look very alike, while on our cover—well, anyhow, both of them are very pretty. They are shown wearing silk blouses from the Cotton Shop.

WHEN W. Somerset Maugham was in New York a few months ago, he told us that he had made up his mind not to write another fiction piece, be it novel, novelette or a short story, for the duration of the war. We respected his decision, but we asked him to do something for which we felt certain our readers would be grateful: Would he consider, we said, condensing "Theatre," that great novel of his which Doubleday, Doran and Company brought out in book-form four years ago? We wanted him to condense it so that we could present it to our readers complete in one issue. Mr. Maugham agreed to do it, and hence it is our privilege to announce that our next issue will contain a fifty-thousand-word version of Mr. Maugham's famous novel of a woman's innermost life. It is probable that even before our next issue reaches the news-stands, John Golden, the theatrical producer, will put in rehearsal the stage version of "Theatre," with Joan Crawford playing the part of the heroine.

MAZO DE LA ROCHE

And now here is good news for the followers of the careers of the irresistible *Whiteoaks*. We will begin, in our next issue, the serialization of "Wakefield's Course," a new novel by Mazo de la Roche. The action takes place in 1939 and 1940. Four *Whiteoaks* participate in the battle of Dunkerque.

Incidental Intelligence: The motion-picture rights of "The Blind Man's House," by Hugh Walpole (a complete book-length novel published in this issue) have been purchased by Twentieth Century-Fox Corporation. Dorothy McGuire and Donald Cook will play the parts of *Claudia* and *David* in the stage version of Rose Franken's REDBOOK stories. Elmer Davis, the author of "Pink-Ribbon Juror" (a short story published elsewhere in this issue), is the man whose voice you hear every day over the Columbia Broadcasting System, explaining to you what's what and who's who in domestic and international politics. When your neighborhood theater announces a picture called "Meet the Stars with Harriet Parsons" (Republic), be sure to see it. It is a newsreel dealing with a party which your REDBOOK gave in Hollywood a few months ago in honor of the people of "Our Town," the winners of our Motion Picture Award for 1940. Some four hundred stars, writers, directors and producers attended the party. "The Powers Girls," by REDBOOK's writer Frederick Van Ryn, a book dealing with those glamorous girls, some of whom appear on our covers, will be published by E. P. Dutton and Company. Vincent Sheean is flying back to England in a few weeks. A short story by him—his first short story in four years—will appear in an early issue of REDBOOK.

Our April credits: Ann, the heroine of our novelette of the month, is wearing a plaid sports costume from Lord and Taylor's Country Shop. The evening dresses illustrated in Franz Hoellering's story come from Kallman and Morris.

"Like every Bride I wanted a Lovelier Skin— and Camay helped me to have one"

—Says Mrs. James L. Macwithey

Photographs by David Berns

Mr. and Mrs. James L. Macwithey were married at Christ Episcopal Church in the fashionable town of East Orange, N. J. Mrs. Macwithey in wedding gown of blush pink satin is crowned by a Mary of Scotland cap. Mrs. Macwithey is a Camay bride —and about it she says: "I adore its mildness. Camay is so mild. It is just wonderful for delicate skin like mine. I really feel that my continued use of Camay helps my skin to look smoother and lovelier."

Camay's Greater Mildness is an important help to Every Woman—even to many with Dry and Delicate Skin.

MRS. MACWITHEY is lovely to look at, and doubly delicious because her skin is lovely, too. Her blonde hair and bright brown eyes set off a skin of creamy perfection.

A Soap Gentle Even to Sensitive Skin!

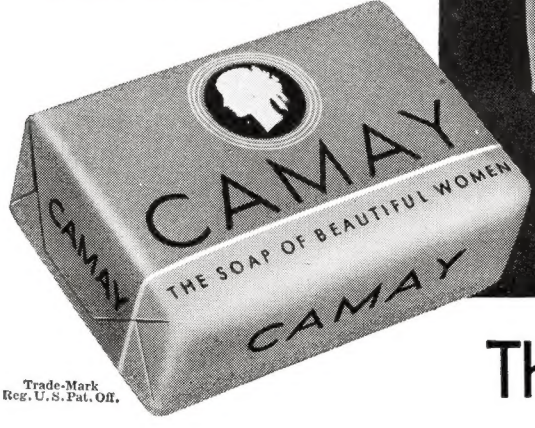
Mrs. Macwithey is keen about Camay's mildness, its soft, creamy lather. "Camay is *so mild,*" she says, "it is just wonderful for delicate skin like mine."

Many women feel that way about Camay, especially if they have a tendency toward a delicate or a dry skin.

For now a great new improvement makes Camay milder than six of the leading large-selling beauty soaps, as our tests prove. Skin specialists we asked say that regular cleansing with a fine, mild toilet soap will help your skin to look lovelier.

Get 3 cakes of this fine mild toilet soap today. Let Camay's gentle cleansing help you in your search for greater skin loveliness.

His bride in his arms, Mr. Macwithey finds her blonde hair and creamy skin an exquisite picture. After the reception the bride and groom left for a honeymoon at Sea Island, Georgia, with Camay in her luggage.



Trade-Mark
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

The Soap of Beautiful Women

OUR READERS Speak

EACH month we will publish not less than ten letters from our readers, and will pay ten dollars for each one published. Address all letters to Editor of Letters, Redbook Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y. Keep your letters within one hundred words. No letters will be returned, and all of them will become property of McCall Corporation.

Three Wrong Predictions

Dear Sir:

After reading "Our Town," and liking it, I predicted that it would never be produced on the stage. After seeing it on the stage and liking it, I predicted that it would never be produced in the movies. And after seeing it in the movies, and liking it, I predicted that it would never be awarded any prize.

Thank goodness, I was wrong on all three counts!

I predicted all these pessimistic things because I had seen so many other works of art go unrewarded.

Congratulations to Broadway, Hollywood, and REDBOOK!

E. C. Blackshear,
Beaumont, Texas.

Mr. Whitfield Cook Takes Two Bows

Dear Sir:

When I finally got off for Florida this season, I found clutched in the crook of my arm a going-away-gift of a sort of cross-section of current issues of the magazine lore of America.

In the pile was a Christmas issue of REDBOOK. "Happy Goes with New Year," the first story in the book, sounded intriguing; the first paragraph was excellent, and before I could say "Jack Robinson," Mr. Whitfield Cook and REDBOOK rounded me up as a reader.

It is my hope that in the future Mr. Cook and REDBOOK will continue to coöperate.

Barbara Parmley,
Coral Gables, Florida.

Dear Sir:

I have just finished reading REDBOOK'S story, "Happy Goes with New Year," by Whitfield Cook. After one week in bed and approximately two hundred short stories, I found it to be the best story of all. It makes me chuckle every time I think about it. Congratulations! And let's have at least one story every month that will make us chuckle, and that will cheer up some of the people who are sick in bed.

Dorothy Webb,
Pasadena, California.

While in God's Great Sky . . .

Dear Sir:

Thanks for printing "Fame Is the Spur," by Howard Spring. I had always looked upon American magazines as cheap and sensational, but REDBOOK is real high class. I enjoyed every word of it, while overhead in God's Great Sky, hell was let loose, and mothers knelt and prayed for their children to be spared from the Nazi bombs, and young men longed for "calling up" time, so that they might take their place in the line against this system of wholesale murder called Hitlerism.

W. Tomlinson,
Wirral-Cheshire, England.

A Librarian Speaks

Dear Sir:

For the past year I have operated a small rental library, and within that year I have become acquainted with REDBOOK.

Often when I would suggest a certain book to a customer, I would receive the reply: "Oh, I read that in REDBOOK—it was their novel of the month," or "That has been running serially in REDBOOK." After a number of similar experiences, I became interested in REDBOOK myself. I, of course, found that each issue contained works of not one, but of several of the best contemporary authors—authors whose works always find a place in the lists of best-sellers.

A magazine with such good taste is just another of the things for which we Americans can be thankful.

Frank N. Schepers,
Overland Park, Kansas.

South Carolina Defends Philip Wylie

Dear Sir:

I have been reading Philip Wylie's "You Can't Beat Beauty" with a great deal of satisfaction and having fun doing it. A couple of times interest lagged, but by the time I was ready to toss the magazine aside *Jenneth* and *Aunt Susannah* started kicking up such a row that I couldn't leave them until I came upon: "To be continued in the next issue."

The fact of my being a native West Virginian makes the story all the more interesting to me. In spite of one of your readers' protests, I know a lot of Jens and Aunt Susannahs and moonshiners tucked away in the hills of that fine State.

Fred Dial,
Columbia, South Carolina.

North Carolina Acclaims Edward Havill

Dear Sir:

When I finished reading Edward Havill's "Curious Challenge" in your January issue, I sat thoughtfully pondering for a few seconds; then turning to the beginning, I reread it, searching and analyzing. Then I glanced through the other stories again, but none had the depth of this story; nor had they the preëminent qualities that it possessed. They satisfy; but "Curious Challenge" does more than that. It impresses, leaves more than a tinge of thoughtfulness. So more power to you who know a great story when you see it; and please, give us more from Edward Havill's pen.

Jessie Sexton,
Jamestown, North Carolina.

Ohio is Captured by Van Paassen

Dear Sir:

I attended Pierre van Paassen's lecture in Akron, Ohio.

I have heard unjust accusations hurled at him, have read of him accused of playing up to an audience through sheer emotionalism; but on the night he lectured, so quiet was the house, that a cough sounded like the rumble of cannon!

There was little fidgeting about, because the people instinctively realized the man meant what he said. They were captured by the sheer magnetism and honesty of Pierre van Paassen!

Jane Ringler,
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

Arkansas Votes for Churchill (Douglas, not Winston)

Dear Sir:

Ever since I can remember, REDBOOK has been in our home, for the simple reason that all members of the family like it. I am an ardent movie fan, so therefore your picture of the month always interests me most. In my meager opinion, Mr. Churchill never fails to select a picture which is tops in entertainment. For three years I have seen almost every one of your selected movies, and I have not been disappointed. May I, then, express my appreciation to REDBOOK for having such a "Picker," and to Mr. Churchill for actually picking the *cream* of the *crop?*

James Ernest Jarnagin,
Stamps, Arkansas.

She "Kept Up" With Our Authors

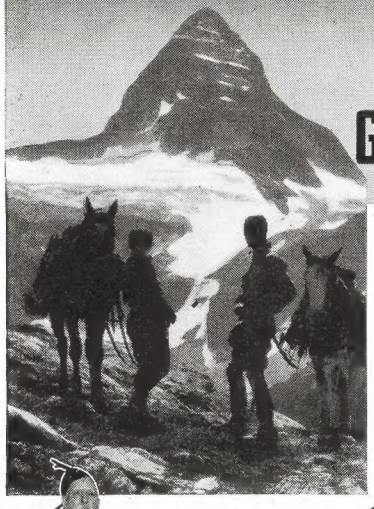
Dear Sir:

During the past five years I've lost sleep by the week, *(Please turn to page 73)*

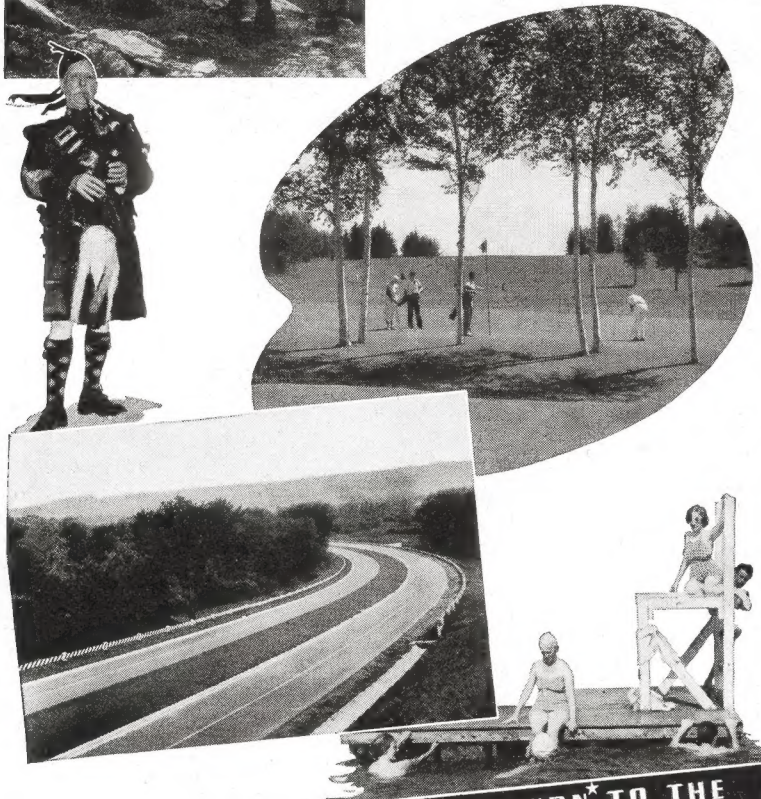
CANADA AT WAR

is still the

GREATEST PLAYGROUND IN THE WORLD



14 Million* Americans *Say so!*



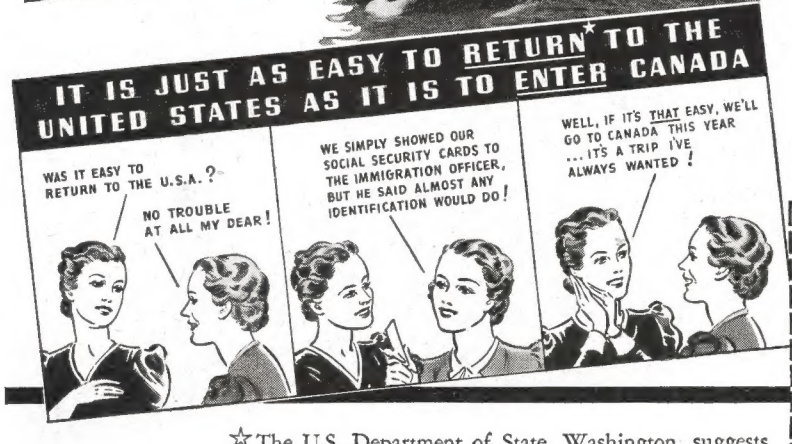
DON'T take our word for the merits of Canadian vacations or for the way we treat you. Ask any one of the 14,000,000* Americans who visited us last year. Perhaps one of them was your next-door neighbour. Ask *him.*

He will soon tell you how easy it is to cross the border; how courteously you are received everywhere; how free you are to move about; how willingly banks, hotels and stores pay the premium on American currency; how easy it is to leave Canada when you please.

And he'll tell you about the wonderful vacationland this great north country really is; how cool and bracing, with fine modern highways stretching in all directions, accommodations to suit all budgets and unlimited scope for every kind of holiday.

Yes, Canada welcomes you as never before. She offers you the freedom of her towering mountains, untracked forests, sparkling lakelands, silver seashores, brilliant cities, lovely towns and of all her broad historic countryside.

**Over* 14,100,000 *United States citizens visited Canada in* 1940. *This tremendous number, over* 10% *of the total U.S. population, does not include the many millions who came to Canada for less than* 48 *hours; it includes only those who stayed in Canada for more than two days.*


IT IS JUST AS EASY TO RETURN* TO THE UNITED STATES AS IT IS TO ENTER CANADA
WAS IT EASY TO RETURN TO THE U.S.A.?
NO TROUBLE AT ALL MY DEAR!
WE SIMPLY SHOWED OUR SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS TO THE IMMIGRATION OFFICER, BUT HE SAID ALMOST ANY IDENTIFICATION WOULD DO!
WELL, IF IT'S THAT EASY, WE'LL GO TO CANADA THIS YEAR ... IT'S A TRIP I'VE ALWAYS WANTED!

☆The U.S. Department of State, Washington, suggests U.S. citizens carry some documents of identification such as old passports, birth or baptismal certificates, naturalization certificates, club cards, tax bills, or similar papers.

YOUR CANADIAN VACATION WILL DO DOUBLE DUTY!

Your Canadian vacation will do far more than give you a glorious time. *It will help the fight for freedom.* For the American dollars you spend in Canada will all go back to the United States in payment for war supplies which Canada is buying there in tremendous quantities.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TRAVEL BUREAU
OTTAWA-CANADA F-141

☐ Please send me free copy of your 60-page illustrated book about vacationing in Canada.

☐ Please send me information on.....

district, province of.....

Name.....

Address.....

.....*State*.....

"finders keepers... losers weepers"

You're fit to be tied! Furious! Your *steady*—out with somebody else! "It's not fair," you wail jealously. But since when has love been fair?

Nowadays you've got to be on your toes *every day* to keep some pretty panther from pouncing on your "heart interest"!

Break a date or two, and next thing you know you're sitting home twiddling your thumbs! *Popular* girls know how to keep going, and keep smiling, regardless of what day of the month it is . . . know how to take "difficult days" in their stride!

How do they do it . . . ? Well—just up and ask 'em! You'll learn something worth knowing . . .

You'll learn that *most* of those carefree, "always-on-the-go" girls use Kotex sanitary napkins.

Ask why and they'll tell you it's because Kotex is so *comfortable!*

The more talkative ones will even explain the reason. They'll say Kotex is less bulky . . . less apt to chafe . . . because it's made in soft *folds!*

Others will praise the flat, invisible ends . . . and rave about the moisture-resistant "safety panel". (They're the girls who value peace of mind!)

But the majority will just say, "Kotex is so comfortable" and let it go at that. After all, comfort is the *main* thing!

And it's comfort that has made Kotex so popular. More popular, in fact, than all other brands *put together!*

• • •

Have you read the much-talked-about booklet "As One Girl To Another"? It's new. It's *free!* And it tells just what you need to know! Discusses swimming, bathing, dancing, social contacts, mental attitude, good grooming, tampons.

Like to have a copy? Then send your name and address (a penny post-card will do) to Post Office Box 3434, Dept. RB-4, Chicago, Illinois. Send today! Before you forget.

Kotex* means comfort . . . at the time you need it most

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*Trade Mark Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

Gene Lester

REDBOOK GREETS THE PEOPLE OF "OUR TOWN"

FOR the second time in as many years, the eyes of Hollywood were riveted upon that massive silver trophy which is known as Redbook's Motion Picture Award of the Year. That "Our Town" was the choice of the editors of Redbook was no secret. Nowhere on earth does the grapevine telegraph work as well as it does in Southern California. But, nevertheless, there were preparations to be made. The afternoon of the presentation ceremonies (which took place, thanks to the coöperation of the Screen Actors Guild and the Gulf Oil people, over the Columbia Broadcasting System) Bette Davis, the winner of the Redbook award for 1939, Douglas W. Churchill (Redbook's motion-picture editor) and Martha Scott, representing the cast of "Our Town," got into a huddle. (See the upper left photograph above.) They rehearsed their speeches; Bette and Martha admired Redbook's trophy, and posed for photographs, first with Churchill, then with Churchill and William Holden (who played Martha's boy friend in "Our Town"). When all was ready, they went on the air. Fay Bainter, Frank Craven, Martha Scott and William Holden played a sketch especially written for the broadcast by Helen Deutsch. Then Roger Pryor, the master of ceremonies of the Screen Actors Guild show (staged by Harry Ackerman), introduced Mr. Churchill, who in turn introduced Bette Davis. Bette Davis spoke at length about the meaning of Redbook's Motion Picture Award and congratulated Martha Scott on her performance. Martha Scott expressed her thanks to Redbook and to Sol Lesser, the man who produced "Our Town." Sol Lesser flattered the editors of Redbook no end by saying that, in his estimation, the winning of Redbook's award is as important for a picture as the winning of the Pulitzer Prize is for a play. That made everybody exceedingly happy, and some four hundred motion-picture stars, directors, critics and columnists retired to Hollywood's most fashionable café, Ciro's, where the editors of Redbook threw a party in their honor.

Alexander Paal

REDBOOK GREETS THE PEOPLE OF "OUR TOWN" *(Continued)*

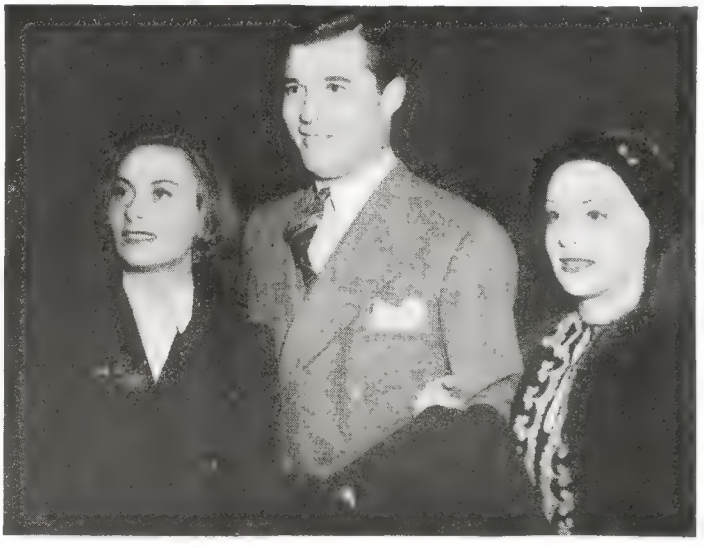
Left to right: Guy Kibbee, Frank Craven, Bette Davis, Beulah Bondi, Douglas Churchill, Sol Lesser, Martha Scott, Sam Wood, Fay Bainter and William Holden carry Redbook's trophy to Ciro's and install it on one of the gayly decorated tables.

Miss Greer Garson (second from left) is congratulating Sam Wood. Miss Garson achieved the rank of stardom as *Mrs. Chips* in the Sam Wood-directed "Good-by, Mr. Chips." Douglas Churchill and Martha Scott watch the reunion.

This couple caused a near-riot among the autograph-seekers as they arrived at Ciro's. It was their first "public appearance" since their engagement was announced. The pretty girl is Deanna Durbin, the young man Vaughn Paul.

Cliff Lewis, an advertising executive, is helping the beautiful Gail Patrick with her coat. It would take much space to enumerate Miss Patrick's screen successes. One of her triumphs was scored in "My Favorite Wife" (Columbia).

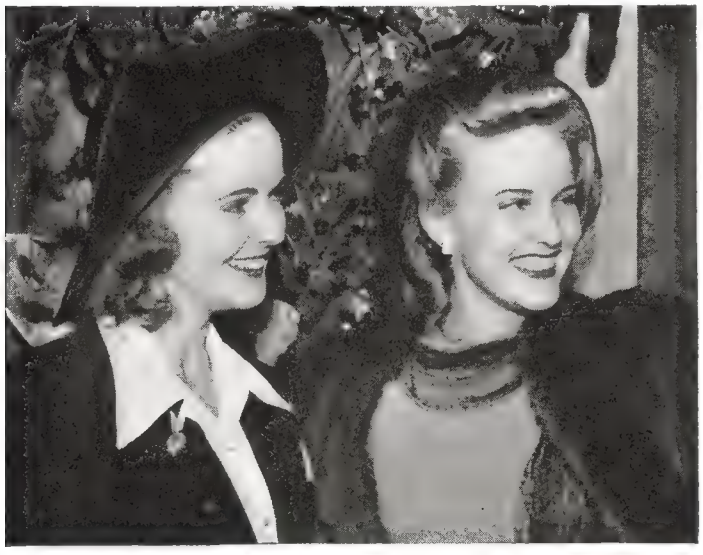
Edward Arnold (left), who will be next seen in Frank Capra's "Meet John Doe," is exchanging fond reminiscences with that bad, bad man of the motion pictures and great pride of the Warner Brothers studios, Edward Robinson.



The RKO studios are proud of these three people: James Craig, at present seen in "Kitty Foyle," is escorting two "European" importations—Michele Morgan (left) and Signe Hasso. Great things are expected from both young women.

If you don't know these two men, you must have been hibernating for at least ten years. Jimmy Cagney (who will be next seen co-starred with Bette Davis in "The Bride Came C. O. D.") is telling a good one to Pat O'Brien (Columbia).

Ernst Lubitsch, Samuel Goldwyn and Hedda Hopper, the columnist, are surveying the scene at Ciro's. Mr. Lubitsch, who scored his first directorial triumph abroad some twenty years ago, has just completed a new picture for Sol Lesser.



Yes, you are right. Both girls have appeared—several times—on our covers. Katharine Aldridge, left, is working for Twentieth Century-Fox. Georgia Carroll, Redbook's discovery of 1937, is working in "The Ziegfeld Girls" (MGM).

Brenda Marshall, James Stephenson, Donald Crisp and a friend are busily talking. They are probably discussing James Stephenson's triumph in "The Letter." You will recall Mr. Stephenson's portrayal of a very unhappy lawyer.

Carole Landis, the blond bombshell of the United Artists lot, is sparkling as usual. Miss Landis, a girl of considerable athletic achievements, was recently seen in the screen version of Thorne Smith's fantastic, hilarious "Turnabout."

Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Erwin. Mrs. Erwin is better known as June Collyer. Mr. Erwin played the part in "Our Town" of that very friendly and very talkative milkman. He earned his share of Redbook's Motion Picture Award for 1940.

STRAWBERRY BLONDE

REDBOOK'S PICTURE *of the* MONTH

selected by **DOUGLAS W. CHURCHILL**

WHEN, in a film, a few years ago, James Cagney plopped a grapefruit in Mae Clarke's face, a substantial segment of the nation decided that the character he portrayed was no gentleman. His film parts during the subsequent decade have done little to alter that impression.

The incident made Cagney, however, in the eyes of a great part of the population. They penetrated beyond this simple violation of the proprieties. The act typified courage and revolt—and rugged manhood.

Males whose conduct was considered exemplary in their communities speculated wistfully on the possibilities. They thought of girls to whom they would like to do that very thing. Cagney, to them, became a symbol, a mighty man who, when he disliked a dame, applied direct action rather than weasel words.

If memory serves, Miss Clarke adored him as a result of this treatment. Her reaction proved what men had long suspected. In spite of this incontrovertible evidence (although such an observation may be considered as sabotaging our defense program during these critical days by reflecting on the manhood of America), few of us had the courage to follow Cagney's example. We merely told ourselves that this was what we ought to do; we didn't have the fortitude to do it.

Ten years later Cagney has displayed a gentler side. In "Strawberry Blonde" he still has rough edges and is hardly the kind of fellow proper young women would take home to meet parents who lack understanding. But he shows that in his heart he is a gentleman who respects, even reveres, pure womanhood.

Just how far this disintegration will go can only be surmised. It is known that in the forthcoming "The Bride Came C.O.D." which he shares with Bette Davis, she slaps him. Although humiliating, it will not rob us of our memory of a giant individualist.

"Strawberry Blonde" with the new Cagney is a rowdy, boisterous comedy-drama of the century's turn. No recent picture has captured the garishness and humor of the period more graphically. This gay approach to the story is unusual, considering its source; it is an adaptation of James Hagen's "One Sunday Afternoon," which was a melodramatic success on Broadway in 1933, with Lloyd Nolan, and which reached the screen in the same form with Gary Cooper, Fay Wray and Frances Fuller.

When Hal Wallis acquired the property for Warners from Paramount, he directed scenarists Julius and Philip Epstein to exploit the colorful and lighter aspects of the age. As a result, in addition to an excellent story, the film recalls the slang, the barber-shop quartettes, the beer gardens, the morals and the pretenses of the era in amusing fashion.

With Cagney as the pugnacious and aspiring *Biff Grimes,* who is studying to be a dentist, are the curvated Rita Hayworth in the title rôle of *Virginia Brush,* the Strawberry Blonde, and Olivia De Havilland as *Amy Lind* her unwanted chum, who though less spectacular quite captures the film as well as the man.

To refresh the memories of those who have forgotten, and to acquaint those who did not see "One Sunday Afternoon," the plot deals with an unsuccessful dentist into whose chair steps the man whom he believes has wrecked his life by stealing his girl. He realizes how easy it would be to give the fellow *(Hugo Barnstead,* played by Jack Carson) an overdose of gas. The picture then cuts back ten years to reveal the events leading up to this moment.

Virginia Brush was the kind of girl *(Please turn to page 106)*

WHAT SECRETARIES REALLY THINK . . .

Tests with 615 secretaries show a 29% longer lasting flavor in Beech-Nut Gum

615 secretaries, in 26 cities, tested peppermint chewing gum. They reported that Beech-Nut's flavor lasted, on an average, 29% longer than the peppermint flavor of all the other brands tested. In addition, 2 out of 3 said that they preferred the flavor of Beech-Nut to that of the other brands. When *you* buy chewing gum, get the *yellow* package of Beech-Nut. *It's delicious.* Discover how long and how much you enjoy its better, stronger peppermint flavor.

They said: *more minutes of flavor*

An independent consumer research organization made the tests*

615 secretaries in 26 cities were tested. Various brands of peppermint chewing gum were bought in local stores and rewrapped in *plain* wrappers. Each secretary was given two different brands (Beech-Nut and one other), asked to report how long she thought the flavor of each stick lasted and which stick tasted better. Thus Beech-Nut was tested against all the other brands. **Name on request.*

Here's how TO PASS YOUR 1941 "BAR" EXAMS!

CROWN COLLINS

Put three ice cubes into a 10 or 12 oz. glass—to cool it. Into cocktail shaker, put juice of ½ lemon and ½ lime; add 1 teaspoon granulated sugar. Add jigger of Seagram's 5 Crown. Shake; strain into glass; fill with soda. Garnish with slice of lemon and cherry. NOTE: 5 Crown's greater *mix-ability* makes it ideal for soda drinks.

MANHATTAN

Place ice cubes in mixing glass. Add dash of Bitters, 1 part sweet Vermouth, 2 parts of Seagram's 5 Crown—biggest-selling brand of the Greatest Name in Whiskey. Stir well—do not shake—and pour. Garnish with cherry. *Delicious!* Because Seagram's 5 Crown—a *blend* itself—*blends better* with other ingredients, it makes a superb Manhattan.

WHISKEY SOUR

Into a cocktail shaker, place ice cubes. Add 1 teaspoon granulated sugar, juice of ½ lemon—and jigger of *popular-priced* Seagram's 5 Crown. Shake well. Strain into 6 oz. glass. Add slice of orange. 5 Crown's *light* yet *full-bodied* flavor gives the finest results—makes the Whiskey Sour a glorious success.

OLD FASHIONED

In an Old Fashioned glass, place one small lump of sugar. Add 2 dashes Bitters, 1 oz. plain water or soda. Muddle thoroughly to dissolve sugar. Add 2 ice cubes and jigger of Seagram's 5 Crown. Garnish with cherry, slice of orange, lemon or pineapple. 5 Crown's *flavor richness*—and *lightness*—lift this drink to the peak of perfection.

EGG-NOG

10 servings. Take 6 fresh eggs. Beat yolks and whites separately, adding ½ lb. of sugar to whites and beat until stiff. Add well-beaten yolks to whites; beat together thoroughly. Stir in 1½ oz. rum. Add 1 qt. of smooth Seagram's 5 Crown, 1 pt. of cream, 1 pt. of milk. Stir well. Grate nutmeg on top. Serve cold, soon after preparing.

Seagram's 5 Crown

THE BLENDED WHISKEY FOR EVERY DRINK

90 proof. 72½% grain neutral spirits. Copyright 1941. Seagram-Distillers Corp., N. Y.

HERE'S HOW TO BE A POPULAR HOST

57 recipes, games, puzzles and other ideas for successful parties in handsome 48-page book "Here's How To Pass Your 'Bar' Exams"—at your dealer—or send 10¢ with this coupon to Seagram's, 407 Lexington Avenue, New York City. Write your name and address below. Get your copy—now.

"WE BAND OF BROTHERS"

BY VINCENT SHEEAN

Wide World

The brilliant author of "Personal History" tells us what the young men of the R.A.F. are really like.

YOU will be reading in the newspapers how many English planes met how many German planes, and how often. You will know the disparity of numbers, the comparative qualities of the planes, the incidence of death among them. The absence of air combat during the winter, owing to reasons only too obvious to anybody who knows the English climate, will soon be forgotten: it will seem to the witness (from afar) that there never has been a time when the sky over the south and southeast of England has been free from the clash of combat machines.

What you will not be hearing or reading, of course, is that these young men waited the whole winter long for their chance; that they were chafing at the bit; that they wanted what they are going to get with the clearing skies. You will not have heard or read what they are like.

In the coming struggle England's defense will lie to a very considerable extent in the hands of a few hundred boys of twenty or twenty-one. Among the bombing crews the ages run a little higher, but even there not many men in active service are over thirty years old. It is these boys (the fighter pilots) who will have to attack Goering's waves of bombers again and again if the great offensive is to be beaten off. They are not all English: an increasing number come from Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. A number of American pilots were in service even during last summer's air war, scattered through the fighter squadrons of the R.A.F., and all enlisted through Canada. Among these was the popular and regretted Billy Fiske, from New York, who was shot down in August. To their number has been added one entirely American squadron (the "Eagle" Squadron) in recent weeks. And in addition to all the English-speaking volunteers, there are also Poles, Czechs, Frenchmen, Norwegians and Hollanders in the service, fighting for the countries they have lost during this fateful year.

Duelists in armor, with wings, they are the romantic heroes of this war, reviving the associations of a long-past era of combat. They would repel any such idea with energy, since they are for the most part averse to fancy words; and yet it is wholly true. What they do demands such high physical perfection and such intrepidity of spirit that they have to be, practically speaking, a breed of heroes. With all of this, they are as brief and slangy as any young men of their age anywhere; they do not appear to have any idea of how exceptional even their most routine work is; and they tend to reject the big patriotic words, phrases, ideas, as wholeheartedly as they reject every other kind of pretense.

To give an idea of how they go about their business, I should like to tell the story of a young fighter pilot named Bill, on a certain day last July. (The R.A.F. is averse to seeing individual names in print, and perhaps Bill would dislike seeing his story passed on, so I do not give his full name: he told the tale to his sister in hospital, and I had it from her.) He had gone up three times on that one day, and had shot down a Messerschmitt each time. I believe his total for the day was actually five—a feat for which he received the Distinguished Flying Cross a month or so later, when he had recovered from his wounds.

AT the end of this phenomenal day, Bill found that his own plane was on fire. He had been wounded; it was high time to get out. He did so, refraining from pulling the string of the parachute for the necessary twenty seconds or so. Thus he plummeted through the upper air, getting away from his own and the enemy planes, until he could stand it no longer and opened up the 'chute. This was more than four miles up above the southeast coast, where the winds are brisk; the parachute began to sway from side to side with considerable violence; Bill was very seasick. (They look like children's toys up high in the air, the men swinging almost a half-circle as the parachute oscillates in the wind). Just when he was feeling most sick and sorry for himself—having lost a good deal of blood as well—he heard a Messerschmitt roaring down after him. "So," he thought, "Jerry's coming to machine-gun me." He tried to think of something he could do. The possible range of action is limited under such circumstances; he was in heavy harness, four miles high, in a brisk wind. The only thing he could think of to do was to light a cigarette.

Those who know about such things tell me it is probably more difficult to light a cigarette up there than it was to shoot down five Germans. And of course it was sheer bravado—Bill didn't really want the cigarette; but what would be the point of being twenty-one, and a fighter pilot, if you were not entitled to a little show of bravado at the moment of death? So he lighted it, slowly, carefully, with infinite difficulty. He had to fish out the cigarette first, which was hard enough, and then get it somehow alight with his supposedly windproof lighter. He *(Please turn to page 84)*

The first one to climb
aboard was the girl.
Three men followed.

Miss GRAY EYES

BY BRISTOL S.D. GROSVENOR

Time: today. Theme: romance. Place: London, Mid-Atlantic and New York. Background: the nightmarish actuality that makes a liar out of truth.

FIFTEEN minutes after the moon broke through the thick clouds, the alarm sounded. It caught Ned Briarcliffe in the middle of Berkeley Square. He shook his fist at the skies and swore. He was sailing for America in the morning, and he had hoped to God that on this, his last night in London, both the moon and the Luftwaffe would favor him by their absence.

"What wouldn't I give to have a crack at Marshal Goering?" he said feelingly; then he began to run.

The twelve million Americans who were watching the Battle of Britain through the all-seeing eyes of Edward L. Briarcliffe, special correspondent of the Zenith Newspaper Syndicate, probably expected him to stand still and wait for the arrival of the Messerschmitts; but Ned was in no mood to consider the feelings of his readers. He was sick and tired of his "vast audience." In fact, he was sick and tired of almost everything: Of war. Of blackouts. Of dictators. Of democracies. Of martial eloquence. Of dumb censors. Of his fellow-correspondents. Of the air shelters with standing room for five hundred, and sanitary accommodations for twenty. Of that ever present *whumpf-whumpf* sound of the falling bombs that had followed him for five long years now, all the way from Addis-Ababa to London. And above all, Ned was sick and tired of himself. He told himself that had he possessed the brains of a goldfish, he would have grabbed the offer of that New York lecture-bureau and told the Zenith people to go jump in a lake. As it was, it looked as if he himself was about to jump in an ocean. He was sailing in the morning aboard the escort ship of a convoy that was supposed to land him "somewhere in Canada," but was more likely to deposit him at the bottom of the Atlantic.

"Am giving you opportunity to write greatest story of the year," read the cablegram from the president of the Zenith syndicate. "Expect you will come through with flying colors."

Come through with flying colors! The cheek of that fat hypocrite! It was pretty soft for him to fight the war at the Stork Club.

"Why," muttered Ned, slowing down to a walk, now that he had reached the very smart and modern apartment house where Jim Richallson lived, "I'll be damn' lucky if I manage to come through at all. Five will get me twenty that a lousy Jerry submarine is laying for me right this minute off the Irish coast."

He mopped his brow and sighed.

"Good evening, sir," said the beautifully liveried doorman. "It's lovely weather we're having tonight."

No answer came from Ned. That was another thing he was sick and tired of: The beaming smiles and the intolerable cheerfulness of doormen, bus-conductors and policemen. . . . "Great Britain's most glorious hour." Well, they were welcome to it. As for him, he would have swapped it gladly for Manhattan's most ignominious ten minutes.

"Do you wish me to guide you toward the lift, sir?" persisted the doorman. "It's quite dark in the lobby. If you permit me, sir—"

"I'll find my way, all right."

He walked through the vast and elaborate lobby and rang for the elevator. Dozens and dozens of heavy bombs had been dropped by the Germans on and around Berkeley Square the night before, but standing in that lobby, one would never have guessed it. It smelled of flowers. Every bit of furniture was in its place. The elevator was still running, and the fellow in charge of it still looked more like a character out of a Hollywood costume picture than an elevator man.

"Is Mr. Richallson in?"

"I believe so, sir. I heard the music playing in his flat a moment ago."

"Music? What kind of music?"

"Sounded like one of those new American dances, sir."

Ned frowned. That was the last blow. He hoped that Jim of all people would spare him that "Keep smiling" nonsense; but evidently two years in London was too much even for a clear-headed boy from Indiana.

THE door leading to Jim's flat was half-open. Ned knocked on it, waited a moment, then walked in. It was pitch dark inside. The perfidious moon managed to disappear; and it was strictly against the rules, of course, to keep the lights on.

"Jim. . . . Hey, Jim. . . . Are you decent?"

That was a standing joke between them. They had first heard that line years ago in a burlesque show in New York. It was entirely wasted now, because no one could have outyelled that devilish gramophone, which sounded

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as if it were being played at the other end of the apartment. Ned stood and listened.

And say, by the way
If you're short, it's okay—

He recognized the tune—"Six Lessons from Madam La Zonga," a song that became a hit on Broadway around the time the Battle of Britain had begun. The Zenith Newspaper Syndicate would have been pleased to learn that its European manager was brushing up on his rhumba steps while the Germans were bombing the hell out of London. . . . All of a sudden, Ned shuddered. Not from fear, but because it was cold as Christmas in that dark room. The great rhumba-dancer must have forgotten to close the windows.

FINALLY *Madam La Zonga* delivered the last of her lessons and the music stopped. Ned jumped on this chance to be heard.

"Jim," he yelled, "where are you? Come out, or I'll start breaking your precious furniture."

"Oh, it's you, Ned."

"Yes, it's me. And I wish you would at least have enough sense to keep the windows closed in this joint."

"Windows? What windows are you referring to, old boy? The last window I had to my name was blasted out precisely twenty-four hours ago."

"Are you kidding?"

"Hardly."

Jim took Ned by the arm and led him to where the windows of the living-room used to be. Even the sills were missing.

"Pretty neat, eh?"

"You mean to say all the other windows were too?"

"Every blessed one of them."

"But can't you do something about it?"

"Have a new set of windows installed in the morning, only to have them blasted out by midnight? No, thanks."

"I didn't mean that. What I meant was that you should have covered this hole in the wall with something."

"Oh, yeah? And how would I watch an air-raid then? This apartment, Mr. Briarcliffe, is the best observation tower in London. Stick your head out where that window used to be, and listen."

Ned listened. He could not see anything, but he could hear the drone of the Messerschmitts. After a while he heard another sound—the clear singing tones of the Spitfires.

"I hope—" he began.

"Don't raise your hopes too high. They'll never catch up with the rotters in this darkness."

"The moon may come out again."

"By the time it does, the sweet little Messerschmitts will be back in France. Hear that? Sounds as if they managed to hit something not far from here."

The house shook.

"Feels like an earthquake, doesn't it?" said Jim. "Praise be to Allah, this is one of the few really modern buildings in London. All steel. Otherwise the Zenith Syndicate would be looking for another European manager by now."

Ned wondered whether the cheerful doorman was still admiring the balmy night. He began to laugh.

"Don't think I'm nutty, Jim. I just happened to think of that magnificent lobby of yours."

"I know, I know. Fresh flowers, resplendent uniforms, broad smiles, gorgeous elevators, but no windows. . . . Yes, we have no windows tonight. We have optimism; we have perseverance; we have lots of other wonderful qualities; but yes, we have no windows. And that is why, Mr. Briarcliffe, sir, yours truly prefers to sit in his bathroom and listen to 'Six Lessons from Madam La Zonga.' . . . I never had any windows in my bathroom. So, in the first place, I cannot possibly miss what I never had; and in the second place, there, thank God, I can keep the lights on. There shall be no blackouts in Jim Richallson's bathroom. . . . That's my motto! Come with me, and let me show you the brightest spot in London."

Fortunately for Jim, the architect who built the house must have believed that a man's bathroom should be his castle. It was so large that even with Jim's typewriter set on a bridge-table, a gramophone mounted on another bridge-table, and a wide assortment of bottles and glasses set on the floor, there was room enough left for a couple of chairs.

"Sit down, Ned. Make yourself at home. What shall it be? Whisky and soda, or brandy and soda? I wish I could offer you some Bourbon, but alas, the management of this bar does not control the movements of the Jerry subs. The ship that was bringing my latest purchases from Kentucky was sunk, I regret to say, within the sight of these shores."

"Do you have to bring that up?"

"Sorry. . . . My mistake. Forgot all about that little trip of yours. Accept my heartfelt apologies. . . . And say—" Jim jumped up. "Speaking about forgetting—just as I was leaving the office, that half-witted spinster you and I are pleased to call our secretary handed me a cablegram she forgot to give you. Said she was awfully sorry, but it seems she was so worried about those poor people in Rumania she could not concentrate on anything else. . . . The fact that her own house was blasted to bits only a month ago does not matter one-tenth as much as that guy what's-his-name they're about to liquidate in Bucharest. You know who I mean? Baronesco or Coranescu or something like that—"

"Will you shut up and hand me my cablegram?"

"Sure, sure, provided I can find it. . . . Now let me see. . . . What did I do with it?"

Jim looked around pensively.

"You know," he said, "the more I listen to rhumba records, the less I understand the Germans. With so much gayety and laughter available in the world, why must that nation—"

"Why must *you?* Why must *you* be such a moron? Don't you see that I'm sitting on pins and needles, that I'm hoping against hope that that cablegram might contain orders to remain in London and forget about the convoy story?"

"No such luck, old boy. It has to do with a girl."

"A girl? What girl? And how in hell do you know what it has to do with?"

"I opened it. Just in case."

"Just in case, my eye! I've never seen such a prying old woman!"

"'A prying old woman,'" Jim repeated slowly. "Thanks, pal. Now I know what I did with that cablegram."

He dashed out. Then he returned, waving the cablegram gayly in the air.

"The moment you said I was a prying old woman, I remembered that I put the cablegram in the sewing basket that belongs to the old lady from whom I sublet this apartment."

"Remarkable!" said Ned dryly. "You ought to be in the Secret Service."

HE read the cablegram avidly, his hands still trembling from anger. It had to do with a girl, all right, but it did not seem to make much sense. He reread it slowly.

"Listen to this, Jim," he said. "Listen to this carefully, and tell me who's crazy—me or that fat guy in New York. Here I am, all set to start on a helluva safari. Jumping jitters! And what do you think they want me to do between now and daybreak?"

"They want you to find a girl with enormous gray eyes. I know. I read it. How about another rhumba record?"

"Shut up. Whether you read it or not, I am going to make you listen to it once more. Quote. 'Have intercepted a message sent by the Gestapo over all German networks announcing that Countess Ludwiga Badrovska, age twenty-two, light brown hair, about one hundred and fifteen pounds, five feet seven, enormous gray eyes, escaped from a concentration-camp near Posnan nine days ago and believed to be somewhere in France. Tremendous interest here. Countess Badrovska is a granddaughter of the late Chaddock Lincoln Pittfield of the Pittfield Mining Enterprises. Her mother and father were reported to have been shot for alleged resistance to German officials the first week of the Polish campaign. According to old Pittfield's will, the escaped young Countess was to inherit on her twenty-first birthday a fortune estimated at not less than thirty million dollars. Prominent Poles here believe the Nazis were trying to make her turn her American estate over to the German Reich. Newspapers are clamoring for details. At no matter what cost get all the information available and cable it before you sail. Zenith.' Unquote."

Ned tore the cablegram up and poured himself a stiff drink.

"Attaboy," said Jim. "Now you're on the right track. I'll have one too."

"'*Cable it before you sail.*' You get the hint, don't you, Jim? To hell with Ned Briarcliffe! Let him sink—let the Jerry submarines get him! Who cares? The woods are full of special correspondents. But let's make sure that the blankety-blanked fool tells us all about Countess Whosis *before* he sinks."

"Don't get excited, my boy."

"Excited! You're talking about excitement? Do you hear that *whumpf-whumpf* stuff?"

"I sure do. The Messerschmitts are unloading."

"Yes, unloading. Anywhere from five hundred to one thousand innocent people will lose their lives in London tonight; but does that

worry the Zenith people? Does that create a tremendous interest in New York? Not a damn' bit. All they care about is that girl with thirty million smackers. . . . Give me a pencil and a sheet of paper."

Jim yawned.

"Don't be an ass, Ned," he said sadly. "You know very well that you're not going to resign. So why waste a sheet of paper? Have another drink and let me play 'Six Lessons from Madam La Zonga.' It does things to you, that song does."

"It might do things to you, but not to me. So long, Jim. I'll be going. It's four in the morning in New York now, and I want them to learn before sunrise that I am through being a sap. No more of this special-correspondent rigmarole for me. Anyway, it's the lousiest racket in the world. Exit Ned Briarcliffe of the Zenith Syndicate. Enter Mr. Edward L. Briarcliffe, the celebrated lecturer."

"Oh, my dear, my dear!" Jim stepped backward and curtsied in a fashion that would have met with the approval of Their Majesties' chamberlain. "It is my privilege, ladies, to introduce to you tonight a very sweet and a very, very handsome young man who will talk to us on the subject of the underprivileged Storm Troopers. Our charming guest, though young in years, has made a long study of that truly fascinating subject. I feel certain that every member of our club will deem it a privilege to listen to Mr. Briarcliffe—"

"Good-by, mugg," said Ned. He hated to laugh, and he knew he would if he stayed even a minute longer with Jim.

"Good luck, lecturer. Don't get too chummy with the submarines."

"I'm telling you that I am not sailing with the convoy. I'm going home on a Clipper."

"Wanna bet?"

"Go to hell!"

"Don't forget, the car from the Admiralty will be at your hotel at seven sharp. My hunch is that you will sail from Liverpool. They won't tell you until the very last moment, but I'm sure it's Liverpool."

"Lisbon and the Clipper for me," Ned insisted.

JIM watched Ned go out, then closed the door carefully and had a quiet laugh. He would have bet his whole collection of rhumba records that not only would Ned sail the following morning with the convoy, but that he would spend the rest of the *(Please turn to page 65)*

He cried: "Stop pretending! You are Countess Badrovska, and I'm going to prove it!"

The story of two children who attended their father's wedding.

Too YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND

By CATHARINE WHITCOMB

Illustrated by ANDREW LOOMIS

WHEN Dorothea went to Reno, she took Honoré with her and left Henry at home with Granny, to his great relief. Henry loved Granny better than anybody else, and they had a fine time together—Henry asking questions and Granny answering. Everything was very cozy. All Henry had to do all day long was breathe and think, if he wanted to. Daddy was living at his club; on week-ends he would come and call, and be very nice and relaxed; he inquired about Henry's health and seemed anxious about Henry's being lonely. Henry assured his father that everything was fine.

Finally, Henry managed to extract from Granny the information that Daddy was going to marry Mrs. Creighford. Henry had watched Mrs. Creighford for three summers, now, ever since he was five; and it seemed to Henry that Mrs. Creighford was the prettiest and the nicest lady he had ever seen. Often he had compared her face and her ways with his mother's; and since Henry was a realist, he decided that Mrs. Creighford was prettier than his mother. Henry liked his mother, but he took her pretty much for granted; she always behaved as mothers should—she dressed nicely and never disgraced him by wearing funny hats, and she refrained from calling upon him at school. In buses she always had the right change, and she did not drop things. When they went to the Zoo, she seemed to know that Henry was as brave as any lion there, and only held his hand to keep him from walking right into their cages. She was a very nice mother, but Henry had fallen in love with Mrs. Creighford just as his father had. Mrs. Creighford had a husband, and he was nice too, only he never said anything; and she had a son named Johnny who was twelve and had a Boy Scout knife. Henry wondered whether they would all live together, and whether he could borrow Johnny's knife once in a while.

Granny seemed to doubt that Mr. Creighford would live with Daddy and Mrs. Creighford and Johnny. She rather thought that he would live somewhere else. Probably Henry would go and visit Daddy and Mrs. Creighford, and Honoré would go too, of course; but, said Granny, you didn't mix up households like that.

"Like what?" asked Henry.

"Well," said Granny, "when people separate, they live in different houses, you see. Now for instance, your mother and you and Honoré will live here in this house, and Daddy and Mrs. Creighford will live in their house, and you will go and visit them."

"No," said Henry; "I will go and live with Mrs. Creighford, I think. I like her better than Mummy."

Granny didn't look shocked at all. She was an old woman, and she had long since dispensed with shocks. She only smiled when Henry said the things he said. All that Granny lived for was Henry, and she hoped she would live long enough to see Henry grown up to the point where things did not puzzle him so much. Sometimes, when Henry sat in her room through a long drowsy afternoon, sorting the spools in her work-basket, and saying the outrageous things he had done and was planning to do, a prayer ran through all of her thoughts, so that every time Henry met her eye, she would smile at him, because she was so glad to be alive and well and watching over him. . . .

One day Dorothea sent a telegram from Reno, announcing that she was sending Honoré home in care of the conductor, and to please meet the train. Henry and Granny went down to the station; and when the train pulled in, they saw Honoré's face up close to the window, looking for them. She seemed quite small to Henry, as she sat there in the big train after all the miles and miles of being far away. The minute the train stopped, Honoré jumped off and ran toward them. She had on her blue coat with the brass buttons; Henry noticed that the sleeves were too short, which meant that Honoré had grown a little since she had left; and yet she looked smaller, just the same.

"Hello, Honorey," he said agreeably. "How are you?"

"I'm fine," she said. "I came home."

"Yes," agreed Granny. "Kiss me, lovey. How is your mother?"

"Oh," said Honoré uncertainly, "she's all right, I guess, except she cried all the time."

Henry was taken aback. He had never seen his mother cry, and could not imagine such a thing happening.

"She *cried?*" he asked disbelievingly.

"Every night," said Honoré. "It got on my nerves."

Suddenly one day, Dorothea came home, and immediately Henry and Honoré started in at the dentist and tried on school-clothes. The weather turned cold, and it was dark in the mornings when they woke up. They missed Daddy, and waited for something to happen; Dorothea spent hours upstairs in Granny's room, talking and talking. It finally turned out that most of the talking was about whether the children should go to Daddy's wedding. Henry and Honoré were very relieved when it was decided that they should go, because they had never seen a wedding, and had no idea what one was like. Henry was apprehensive, because he had decided to live with Mrs. Creighford, and since time was getting short, he thought he had better advise his mother of his plans.

HE approached her one afternoon after school. He stood in front of her and cleared his throat. She looked up from the book she was reading, and smiled.

"Yes, Henry?" She seemed tired and quiet. Henry became tongue-tied. He had never felt pity before, so he could not know what emotion stirred him now. He wondered whether his mother would cry when he told her his plan; and out of curiosity to see what she would do, he was emboldened to say: "Mummy, I think I will go and live with Mrs. Creighford and Daddy after the wedding." He added quickly: "Honorey can live with you."

He could see his mother trying to control herself; he watched her mouth tighten, and her nose looked pinched all of a sudden. Then she looked unaccountably the way Honoré had, that day on the train, and this astonished Henry, because he knew Honoré had been scared. What was his mother scared about, he wondered. He waited for her assent; but instead, his mother asked a question.

"Why, Henry? Why did you say what you just said?" She stared at him as if he were a stranger to her.

Faced with the necessity of replying, Henry was at a loss. He put his hands behind his back, but not soon enough; his mother saw them, and immediately changed the subject. "Go wash your hands," she said gently. And repeated, as if he had not heard: "Go and wash your hands, Henry. This minute."

Mrs. Creighford looked surprised. "Why, darling, we were married fifteen minutes ago!"

Henry had an uncomfortable feeling that the interview had not been a success. He was quite surprised, though, when Granny told him he had hurt his mother's feelings; he had not meant to—he was simply being practical. Honoré and his mother got along fine, and he and Mrs. Creighford got along fine: that was the point. Didn't Granny understand what he meant?

Yes, Granny said, she understood in a way; and perhaps Henry would too, some day.

"Perhaps," agreed Henry, "but I doubt it."

One night Honoré tried on a new blue dress, and then Henry knew for sure that they were really going to go to see Daddy get married. He immediately went upstairs to pack. Granny heard him dragging a valise down the hall. She came into his room and closed the door.

"Good evening, Henry," she said. "Are you going somewhere special?"

"Well," said Henry, "I thought I better get this old bag packed, so I'll be ready to go and live with Mrs. Creighford and Daddy when they invite me and all."

Granny sat down on the bed. "Oh," she said calmly, "I see. You've quite made up your mind, Henry?"

Henry said firmly: "Why, yes, Granny. Don't you remember? I said so, a long time ago." His brow puckered. "The only thing is, I don't know how to pack my bird's-nest."

"I'll get some tissue-paper," said Granny quickly, and went into her room. Presently she returned; the valise was already bulging with Henry's belongings. She said slowly and artfully: "Henry dear—I have here a pair of socks I knit for you. I was going to save them until Christmas; but since you're going away so soon, I thought—"

Henry shut his eyes in agony and waved his hands wildly. "Don't let me see," he moaned. "Don't let me see. If it's for Christmas, I don't want to know what it looks like. I want to be surprised. Take it back. Go away."

"It isn't your main present," said Granny. "Why don't you just take it along with you, Henry?"

"*No,*" shrieked Henry. "*Please,* Granny, take it away."

"Very well." She relented. "But I thought maybe you might not be back here for Christmas."

Henry was aghast. "Why, I'll have to come back for my *presents,* Granny."

"Oh, of course," she said equably. "Certainly." She went to put the socks away—smoothing them gently, thinking of Henry's bare feet pitted with mosquito bites from the past summer, and the scar on his knee where he had fallen off his velocipede when he was three. Suppose he really should go away and live with George? Her old heart trembled.

"IS it all hidden now, Granny?" Henry called anxiously.

"Oh, yes," she replied.

"Well, that's good," he said with relief. "And I'll try to forget what you said it was. Can I have something to wrap my skunk's tail in?"

"Mercy!" she exclaimed, running into his room. "You're not going to take *that* thing with you, are you?"

"It's the best thing I've got," said Henry fondly. "I'm going to give it to Mrs. Creighford to make a collar of."

"Well, all right," Granny said weakly; "but I don't think she'll like it much."

Henry was outraged. "It's *fur,* isn't it? I found it on a real dead skunk, didn't I? *All* fur is dead, isn't it? What's the matter with this, anyhow?"

"I beg your pardon, Henry," said Granny. "You are perfectly right."

"I'm going to take it to her when I go to the wedding," announced Henry. "Please can I borrow a nice box, Granny? You better *give* me a box, I guess—I can't ask for it back again, can I?"

"I suppose not," she agreed. "You can have the box my best soap came in—that'll make it smell better."

"It *doesn't* smell," said Henry passionately, and he caressed the skunk's tail lingeringly.

Granny stood beside him and looked down into the valise. "Why not wait until tomorrow, Henry, after the wedding? Leave your suitcase in your closet, and you can pick it up later when your plans are more settled." She strove to sound calm, but she was thinking: "Don't leave me, Henry! Other people won't be very different from those you know now—you only think they will be better and kinder and more understanding. Don't go now, Henry, because you'll be terribly disappointed."

Henry spoke judicially. "That's a good idea, Granny. I'll put it in the closet for now."

The following day Henry quarreled incessantly with Honoré all morning. This was by way of being an affectionate farewell, but Honoré did not know it. Granny helped them get dressed; she was going to take them to the hotel where the wedding was to be. At the last minute their mother came in to see how they looked. She took their faces in her hands and kissed them repeatedly; and when she left the room, Henry realized with awe that she was crying. He was dumfounded.

Granny took them as far as the lobby of the hotel and pointed out the coat-rooms to them. "Honoré, you leave your coat over there to the right, and Henry leaves his on the left. I'll meet you right here at six o'clock—don't forget. Now, you walk right up the stairs and ask for your daddy."

The children looked scared. "Aren't you going to stay, Granny?"

"I'm going home to be with Mummy. Good-by and have a nice time. Remember your manners, Henry." She went back through the revolving doors and out into the street.

Honoré looked as if she might cry. "Do I have to leave you all alone, Henry?"

Henry said coldly: "I'll walk up those stairs with you, but that's all. Hurry up and let's leave our coats."

At the top of the stairs was a large room that to the children seemed impassable, with crowds of people standing around all laughing and talking loudly.

Honoré quavered: "I don't see Daddy anywhere, do you, Henry?"

Henry craned his neck. "Over there," he shouted, and began to wave his hand violently.

It took them a long time to cross the room to where Daddy was. The children said, "Excuse me," and "Please can we get by?" several times before they reached him. He was standing beside Mrs. Creighford; and at sight of her, Henry was struck dumb. She looked quite different from the way she looked in the summertime. Today she was a stranger to him in a coffee-colored chiffon dress and a hat on—he had never seen her in a hat. She was smiling, as usual, but she was even more beautiful than he remembered; Henry clutched the box under his arm and began to sweat.

Their father saw them and waved his hand. Mrs. Creighford said, "Hello, darlings," as she bent down to kiss them. "How nice of you to come! And how sweet you look!"

Daddy said: "Hello, Honoré darling. Hello, son—what you got there—a present for us?"

"A present for *her*," Henry corrected, and jerked his thumb toward Mrs. Creighford.

"How thoughtful of you, Henry!" she exclaimed.

"He prob'ly wants you to open it now," said Honoré wickedly. Daddy interrupted: "It can wait, I guess. Meanwhile here's something for both of you, from us." He fished in his pocket and brought out two five-dollar bills. "Here. Buy yourselves a present."

The children said: "Thank you, Daddy, very much." Then Henry asked boldly: "Well—when are you going to get married?"

Mrs. Creighford looked surprised. "Why, darling, we were married fifteen minutes ago." She looked fondly at Daddy. "It's all over, isn't it, sweetheart?" And Daddy turned red, and said to the children: "Yes—er—you see, this is the reception; we thought—uh—you might be bored by the wedding." He saw the disappointment on their faces and said earnestly: "This is the main part—the most fun for you kids, anyway."

SUDDENLY Honoré said, "That's all right, Daddy," but Henry knew from the tone of her voice that it was not all right at all. She asked shyly: "Do you like my new dress, Daddy?" And Henry spoke up accusingly: "She got it just for the *wedding*, you know."

"You look lovely, Honoré," said Mrs. Creighford warmly.

"Fine, fine," agreed Daddy hastily. "Your mother pick it out for you?"

"Yes," pursued Henry relentlessly, "she did. She wanted Honorey to look extra nice for the *wedding*." He stared thoughtfully at his father. "Have *you* got on a new suit, Daddy?" he inquired politely.

Mrs. Creighford laughed. "George, we are being subtly scolded." She turned her smooth, beautiful face toward the children. "I think Johnny is over near the refreshments. Why don't you go and find him?"

Henry held out the box. "Why don't you open your present?" he urged. "I want you to open it up."

"All right, Henry," said his father genially. "Give it here." He was making amends for the children's disappointment.

"It's not for you," glowered Henry. "It's for her."

Mrs. Creighford began untying the ribbons around the box. "What pretty ribbon, Henry!" And Henry craned his neck to watch as she took off the lid and looked inside.

Her smile faded and she asked in a puzzled way: "Why—what *is* it?"

Honoré was watching her father's face, and she began to breathe hard suddenly, but Henry was oblivious.

"It's a skunk's tail," he said blissfully, and blinked with pleasure.

He felt his father's hand drop heavily on his shoulder, and he looked up. His father's face was red too, but with a quickening of his heart, Henry saw that his father was angry. "Where did you get that thing, and why did you bring it here?" he demanded in low and furious tones. He shook Henry. "*Answer* me!"

Mrs. Creighford put a restraining hand on his father's arm. "No, no, George, don't scold him." She said, slowly and meaningly: "He didn't think it up himself."

His father relaxed. "That's right," he agreed. "He couldn't have. Never in this world." He said, in tones meant for her ears alone but which the children heard plainly: "His mother must have put him up to it."

Henry looked up in amazement, and saw Mrs. Creighford, eyebrows raised, nodding to his father in understanding. Honoré said excitedly: "She did *not*. Mummy did not tell Henry any such a thing! It was his own idea, and it's his favorite thing, too."

"I like it the best of anything I got," muttered Henry wretchedly. "I wanted you to have it."

Mrs. Creighford soothed: "You're too young to under- *(Please turn to page 88)*

The orchids were in the air as he leaped against someone in a flying tackle, but they were in his grasp when he picked himself up from the floor.

WHY shall we never see again the world of yesterday? What are Hitler's most effective catchwords? What happens to a man, once he falls under the spell of the Nazi doctrines? Why would a "negotiated peace" mean Hitler's ultimate victory? What kind of a new order will emerge out of

WHAT THIS WAR

Photos by International and Wide World

By HERMANN

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I HAVE put out the light, and I am looking through my window, which opens above a tennis court. Thick masses of smoke from a fire down among the docks move across the sky, making a ruddy twilight. Searchlights flash across the heavens; their shafts sweep together into bundles, part again, and vanish. It is a real night of the Apocalypse. The bombers move in roaring circles above us. Bursts—distant—closer; the whistle of bombs very near, and the quiver of heavy hits hard by. I go down to find fellow-humans.

We have made ourselves at home in the cellar below. I have set up a table in the telephone-booth. There I can work without disturbing the others. We have adjusted ourselves to each other. We lie on blankets and mattresses, overcoats and cushions.

There are thousands of Anderson shelters in London, tiny lifeboats in an open sea. They give no elbow-room. You hear the roar of the bombers and the barking of the guns. The little crew of such a boat is utterly alone in the midst of the endless universe—alone face to face with destiny, with an inscrutable force, a cosmic power in human employ. Everything has grown unimportant. Man is faced once again with the black of night, the inconceivable power of unreadable destiny; he is shaken loose from all the securities of a domesticated life.

And above us this old city is crashing into ruins bit by bit. It is slow work. Such destruction is not easily completed. But every night the dead zone in the great stone creature grows. None knows how it will end, how it can end. Yet one thing everyone feels: as the old continent once sank away beyond the horizon from the Pilgrim Fathers on the old *Mayflower,* so now this age and the present are fading before us. The whole world of yesterday, of today, this world of habit, is disappearing. We shall see it no more. It is a farewell forever.

"Where Is the New Substance"?

How did the disaster come upon us? How could it all happen? How could that man infect a whole nation with his madness, and impose his yoke of destruction and thralldom on the world? How was it possible? This is the question on everyone's lips.

The German disintegration brought forth the revolution of nihilism. It has expanded into universal dissolution, into world revolution. The social structure has changed under the hands of those in political command. The great political order is going to pieces. New groupings are coming into being, uniting into power blocs and breaking up again. This is no mere war, with the usual aftermath. Forces that had been stored up are bursting the old dams.

What is permanent in this transformation? What is to be retained, and what cast aside? Where is the new substance? Not simply the exterior order, but the new frontiers, the new institutions?

Hitler's Catchwords

The dynamite with which Hitler has blasted his way to the nerve-center of the democracies' will-power consists of a few absurdly simple ideas. He has contrived to mislead socialist society by his slogan that this is a capitalist war in which the socialist is not concerned; his time is yet to come. He has paralyzed the propertied classes with the slogan that war is bound to destroy property. If the war is carried through to the end, he says, nothing can be more certain than the thing it was supposed to avoid, namely the communism of universal pauperhood. The masses will rule, and total dictatorship will be the inevitable end. To the politically inert masses, Hitler has given the only catchwords that ever attract them—"Why war?" "Rejoice in life," "Strength through joy," "Happiness, peace, security." Peace could be assured tomorrow; it would be here today if the people had the last word.

Hitler addresses himself to a third class. These are the adventurous, the restless, those with too much energy. For them he has on tap the obsolescence of the European order, the weariness of an outworn civilization, the attenuation of a bourgeois and Christian age long since dead. The strong man must rule; the weak man must serve.

Most important of all, however, is yet another class that Hitler addresses, though perhaps not directly. I mean the progressives, the advocates of rational planning. It is paradoxical but true that Hitler draws even them into his sphere of influence. Hitler as an advocate of sensible progress, which simply cannot be halted, has a rather odd sound. But is not Hitler actually clearing away obstacles to a reasonable new international order? What, after all, does this multiplicity of European states mean, what these unnumbered economic boundaries, this artificial protectionism? Is there any sense in dozens of national state sovereignties in an age when technology has shrunk distances to nothing? Is not life bound to fight relentlessly onward? Is it not a sign of barrenness and stupidity to oppose the new age through sentiment and resentment, instead of throwing in with the advancing future, and lending a hand?

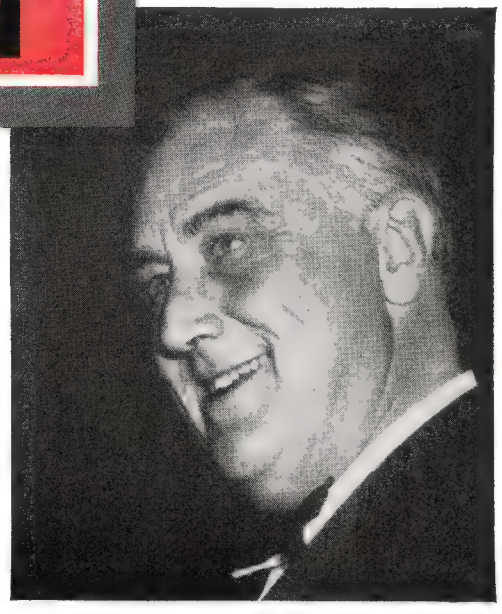
The Mortal Dangers

From "living-space" to "right of young nations" and "new world order," a torrent of new National-Socialist-coined parallels pours into the defenseless, passive and inert

the present chaos? You will find answers in the following excerpts from "The Redemption of Democracy," a great new book by the author of "The Revolution of Nihilism" and "The Voice of Destruction." Read these excerpts carefully and you will learn in the shortest time—

IS REALLY ABOUT

RAUSCHNING



political thinking of the democratic states, slowly but basically transforming their entire intellectual and political life. All these processes are much more complicated and far-reaching than the comparatively crude effects of "Fifth Columns" and paid auxiliary forces. The disintegration of the self-preservative instinct in the nation attacked remains impalpable; it is not an act that can be punished by law. It is not defeatism; it is the complete inner transformation of the victim; long invisible, it comes suddenly and astonishingly to light.

The Mastery of the Seas

The unique, great advantage of the German leaders over other powers and personalities consists in their early recognition of the rising world revolution, and in their ability to exploit it. Hitler knew there was more at stake than business depression, markets, raw materials or boundary revisions. But he had also grasped something more, and if he did not recognize it himself, his friends helped him to recognize that only the nation that wins the mastery of the seas can really rule the world. This means the great open ocean, not what the Germans call seas, the Baltic or the North Sea. Hitler, as an Austrian inlander, who had never so much as seen salt water until quite late in life, thought in Continental terms. To him the sea is alien, uncanny; he does not love it as he does the mountains, and he has never become intimate with it. Nevertheless he is convinced of the truth that a world-power must dominate the great oceans, and he has realized that a new world dominion can arise only through the collapse of the old.

It was necessary then, Hitler reasoned, to dissolve Great Britain from within, to bind it by alliances to National Socialist Germany, to transform it inwardly, corrupt it, cause it to degenerate. This is the meaning of the celebrated junior partnership between Great Britain and Germany, this the purpose of Hitler's costly efforts at alliance. It seems to me that if we recognize this part of Hitler's policies, Ribbentrop's mastery of intrigue must appear in a rather doubtful light. Perhaps it is not too much to say that if Germany had had another ambassador, say a man more of the old school, in London, Hitler might have succeeded better in preserving peace for another six months; and then if he had shown a little more moderation and a less intransigent attitude in the Polish question, his plans might possibly have worked after all. The tendencies toward coming to a compromise with Germany were as strong as this.

Is it fortunate for Great Britain that war came? This is a question I do not care to answer. Yet for the future of Great Britain and the Commonwealth the question has never been greater than when there was still a possibility of compromise with the present German system of world revolution. Hitler committed the decisive blunder of his life when for the sake of a showy triumph he threw away a possible success, though one that would not have produced such theatrical results. How he was induced to do this against his better judgment is unknown. Perhaps Ribbentrop, of subaltern mentality and limited capacity despite all his slyness, managed to convince Hitler that he need not go the long way around to destroy the Empire—that England was too decadent even to venture a war.

Not Afraid of the United States

Hitler thinks he sees the signs of a great revolution in the near future for the United States. This belief has given him confidence, and led him to disdain the warnings uttered early and often by men like Fritz Thyssen, that he must by all means gain the sympathy of the United States for the new Germany, and avoid any rupture.

Hitler rejected these ideas because he did not consider North America a decisive factor.

In substance Hitler has repeatedly told his intimates that he was not afraid of the United States as a power, because it was his purpose to unloose upon the American continent a revolution of unprecedented dimensions. Sooner or later America's hour would strike, to create a new future through breakdowns and turmoil on a gigantic scale. When asked how such an upheaval would be possible, he replied with a wealth of alleged facts of which it was almost impossible to have any real knowledge in Germany. He mentioned the ever-growing uprooted masses, the destruction of the old colonial world with its sharply defined political and social ideas. There was, he said, a vast army of the economically disappointed, the unsatisfied, who have always formed the reservoir for new revolutions everywhere. He said there was a special world of lads completely without hesitations, the world of adventurers and gangsters. There was a not inconsiderable contingent of persons who took pleasure in cruelty and tortures. In the eyes of the National Socialist elite, America was, so to speak, a naked, brutal world where the will to power and ruthless violence was veiled only by a gossamer sheath of convention, which one could rend in a moment. What opportunities for disintegrative propaganda, for the formation of revolutionary organizations! These "bootleggers" and other remnants of Prohibition could be hired as mercenaries. There were innumerable creatures ready to do anything for money. The system of the political "boss," who deals in votes for money, seemed *(Please turn to page 94)*

THE Best Thing OF ALL

By FRANKEN MELONEY

Redbook's NOVELETTE OF THE MONTH

IT had been one of those early March days that start with the caress of spring and end with the full venom of winter. Ann Riversley strained her eyes to see through the sleet-encrusted windshield. There had been no threat of stormy weather as she had turned her little coupé out of her sister's driveway in Maine that morning; but halfway through Massachusetts, clouds had filled the sky, and now a heavy wind threatened to sweep the light car off the road.

A grove of maples, silvered enchantingly by the sleet, held her gaze an instant too long. The car swerved, and there was the crunch of a fender against the bank. Ann used the best of the worst words she knew, and put the car into reverse. . . . No hope. She was stuck.

She remembered having passed a group of roadside cottages about half a mile back. She was almost certain to find a telephone there; and surely somewhere in this lost corner of the State, a service-station would be functioning.

It seemed an eternity before the lights of the house loomed up out of the driving rain, and a sign, swinging from the branch of a gigantic maple, bade her welcome to a group of tourist bungalows. As she approached, an enormous racket of dogs barking burst on her—an army of dogs! She froze in sheer horror; then she bolted for the porch of the house and hammered at the dark door.

A man's voice demanded: "What do you want?"

Ann gasped: "Those dogs—"

"Don't mind them; they're all in kennels; that's our business here."

She let out her breath in relief. "Have you a phone?" she requested.

He looked at her, a small grin tugging at the corners of his lips. In the dim light from within, she saw that he was a nice-looking young man, dressed in high boots, blue jeans and a flannel shirt.

"You'd better come in," he said. "Sure, we've got a phone. Only it's out of order. Storm." He guided her with a firm hand inside and toward a dark room beyond. "Stand still and I'll turn on the light," he instructed.

She stood still. The glare blinded her for a moment, and then she saw she was in the kitchen, and that an old woman was sitting before the table peeling potatoes.

"This young lady's car broke down, Mom."

The old woman's face turned toward Ann, and unseeing eyes stared into distance. She was blind, Ann realized. "Better you warm yourself at the fire," she invited. Her speech was rich with the echo of some old-country language—German, Austrian, Swiss? Which, Ann wondered.

"My husband and I were born in Alsace-Lorraine. My son was born here."

Ann started. It was as if her mind's question had been read.

"Our name is Freubel, and this is my son Paul," the old woman continued. "Come nearer to the fire, my child; you are cold."

Ann moved gratefully toward the warmth. "My name is Ann Riversley," she offered in turn, feeling suddenly shy.

"Better take your shoes off," Paul Freubel suggested bluntly. He left the room, returning after a few moments with a man's old camel's-hair coat and a pair of boudoir mules. "Here, put these on," he commanded. "I have to go back upstairs; Mom'll take care of you until the storm lets up."

Mrs. Freubel moved to the sink with the pan of potatoes. "Better you stay here tonight," she said.

"Impossible," Ann was about to reply. "I have to get to New York." But Mrs. Freubel was ahead of her. "Maybe it's important for you to be somewhere? Maybe somebody worries about you?" she anticipated gently.

Somebody worrying about her? She wished it were so. What a glorious feeling it would be to have someone worry about her! There was Tom Barston, of course. But Tom wouldn't worry about her. It was a little the same with Helen, who considered Ann in the light of a duty, rather than as a younger sister.

She had parted from Helen this

morning after an argument that had verged perilously close to open bickering. It had had to do with Ann's refusal to marry Tom (of whom Helen approved wholeheartedly); and Helen had also taken exception to Ann's decision to sell Broadfields, the farm her father had left to her. To Helen he had left her mother's jewels and the house in Bar Haven, in which she and her husband now spent the summers; to Ann the farm and a block of stocks. He left her a letter also—a very intimate letter, in which he told her of his love of the land, and his hope that Broadfields would always insure for her contentment, security and keen pleasure.

For a while his hope had come true. And then things began to tumble. The stocks' dividends dwindled from two hundred to fifty a month, and along with the débacle, the market for her father's Morgan horses and pure-bred sheep abruptly vanished. Now it was a struggle to feed livestock, when there was scarcely enough money to meet her own small bills.

"COME. You must eat something. It is dinner-time."

Ann stirred from her thoughts and seated herself before a steaming bowl of soup, which she contemplated appreciatively. A low moan broke in upon her unashamed enjoyment. She looked up, startled.

"Paul's wife," Mrs. Freubel quietly explained. "The doctor is with her now. Her baby is coming—sooner than we expected. Things are not going well."

"Oh! But I oughtn't to be coming in on you at a time like this," Ann cried remorsefully. "Why didn't you just throw me out?"

"You are no bother. You are welcome."

At that moment steps sounded on the stairs. The doctor hurried into the kitchen, followed by Paul, white-faced and desperate.

"For God's sake, Doctor," he implored, "do something, do something!"

Ann read the grim story in the doctor's silence. He avoided Paul's frantic eyes and looked at Ann. "Young lady," he said, "whoever you are, I'm glad you've come. I can use you tonight. . . . Paul, you keep out of the way now. Mrs. Freubel, plenty of clean cloths and boiling water, please—" He turned back to Ann. "Come on upstairs."

Ann braced herself to meet the agony of childbirth, but she was unprepared for the still, white face of the girl in the bed. The

"I don't want to sell you a dog," he said. "I just want to talk to you."

doctor seemed unprepared for it too. He sprang to the bed and lifted the limp wrist. "We'll have to work fast." He began whipping shades off the lamps. He tossed Ann a freshly laundered sheet from a pile on the table. "Pin that around you, and do what I tell you when I tell you, even if you don't understand why. And don't be afraid of your strength."

Fevered moments of action lengthened, and still the battle for life was waged. Waves of giddiness approached Ann, and she bit her teeth into her lips until the sharp pain drove the faintness away.

Then suddenly it was over. Ann looked down at the girl, saw her slow breathing. A merciful oblivion enfolded and protected her, but already a pale, living beauty was returning to the young face.

There was a loud slap, and a thin, reedy cry broke the stillness of the room. Ann wanted to get down on her knees. It was the salute of young life to the world, young life clamoring to be made warm, and to be fed.

ANN slipped her feet out of her pumps and leaned back in the kitchen rocker. She was tired beyond the hope of sleep—excited, too. The doctor had praised her to the skies. "I could make a fortune being a midwife," she told herself complacently. The rocker squeaked, and she eased it to a stop for fear of disturbing Paul, tucked up in his mother's bed in the next room.

It was pleasant to be the only one awake in a sleeping household. How peaceful—how quiet. It was going to be a nice day, too. The storm had passed. . . .

The ringing of a bell filtered through to her. She sprang out of her chair and raced to the door, pushing a strange young man halfway across the porch before she drew it shut behind her. "What's the idea of banging around at this hour of the morning?" she exploded.

His jaw dropped. "Is there anything wrong with ringing a bell at half-past ten of a Wednesday morning?"

"Half-past what?"

"Ten."

"I don't believe it," she announced flatly. "A few minutes ago it was only five o'clock."

He was intrigued. "You must live at a great pace in this household. Well, anyway, will you tell your husband that Christopher Wain would like to see him about a dog?"

She remembered the barking last night, and that Paul had mentioned kennels. "No, I will not," she replied firmly. "I wouldn't wake him for anything."

"Oh, I'm sorry. Is he ill?"

"He had a baby last night."

"I don't understand—" Mr. Christopher Wain flushed and stammered. "You're the one who ought to be in bed, aren't you?"

"Me?" His query resounded in her ears. "Oh, I'm not Carol—I'm not Paul's wife, for heaven's sake. I'm just a friend."

"Oh." He smiled suddenly. "Well, do you think anyone would mind if I looked at the pups now, as long as I'm here?"

Ann hesitated, trying to size him up. He had an agreeable voice; he was quite nice looking, too, with a good carriage and cool gray eyes. But he was dressed like a tramp—old crêpe-soled shoes, and a frayed tweed suit. Her roving gaze took in a huge antediluvian-looking roadster, sorely in need of paint.

"Do you know where they are?" she asked doubtfully.

"Oh, sure. I've been here before. You see, I raise Great Danes too—just as Paul does."

"Oh," Ann said. That explained him a little. She decided that raising Great Danes must be one of those dangerous occupations that kept its followers close to bankruptcy.

"Of course," he went on, "I don't put myself in a class with the Freubels. They've been at it for generations."

"You mean, that the Freubels make a business of raising these dogs—that that's all they do?" s'e asked incredulously.

"Well, it's like a lot of businesses—they're losing money at it right now, and Paul takes in tourists to pay for the dog meat." He glanced at his watch. "Come on and have a look at the pups. Paul told me I could have my choice of the litter."

Five gangling nine-month-old Great Dane pups were in a generous run stretching back on the hillside behind the tourist cottages. "Ummm," Christopher appraised them. "Not so bad. Which one would you pick?" he asked in a friendly way.

"My dear!" Berta called. "It's all over! We've won! Christopher is just like an excited boy."

It was hard to choose between them. To Ann they were five compact, lithe packages of energy, all equally ingratiating. Then her gaze began to follow a fawn-colored one, a little smaller than the others.

"I'd pick that one," she announced.

Christopher Wain glanced at the dog and shrugged. "Hasn't developed, and probably won't. Over there, though—that's the flyer of the lot!" He pointed to a proud brindle pulling at a gunny-sack with one of her brothers. "Yes, sirree," he repeated with mounting enthusiasm. "That's the pup. Tell Paul I'll pick her up later."

"I'm sure Mr. Freubel will be delighted," said Ann.

"I'm sure he will," said Christopher Wain.

Her blood boiled. He was the sort of young man who must always have the last word. She heard him start his rattletrap roadster, and she felt a great desire to hurl something after him. What cocksureness!

When she entered the house, she could hear Paul moving about his room. Now that there was no danger of disturbing him, she decided to try the telephone.

A turn of the crank brought the welcome sound of the operator's voice, and a moment later Ann had arranged with a garage to pull her car out of the ditch and bring it to the Freubels'.

"Going so soon?" Paul asked grievedly from the doorway.

"So soon? It's high time, I should say."

"Mom won't let you go without lunch. Carol wants to name the baby Ann, and that's O. K. with me. Say, didn't I hear a car just drive out?"

"I'm speechless—I've never had anyone named after me! The car? Oh, yes, I almost forgot to tell you. It was a man about a dog, but I didn't want to wake you."

"What was his name?"

"Wain."

"And you let him go?" he gasped. He went on in rich irony: "That's just ducky—me sleeping, and Christopher Wain getting away right under my nose!"

"But he picked out a dog, and he said he'd be back."

Paul relaxed. "Well, that's fine. Come and show me which one, will you?"

Mrs. Freubel was out by the kennels, and Paul told her what had happened. Ann pointed to Wain's choice. "That's Gretel," said Paul. "He picked the best one, all right."

Ann looked crestfallen. "Then I'm an ignoramus, because I'd have chosen that one over there instead—"

"You mean the fawn with the black mask? That's Rowena. Nice pup, but she's the runt of the lot."

"I like her, anyway."

"Lady, she's yours. Just a small token of our appreciation," Paul said with incongruous formality.

Ann was touched. From what Christopher Wain had told her, a gift of one of the Freubel Great Danes was a not inconsiderable gesture. She knelt before the dog. "She's perfect. . . . Oh, you darling, how can I resist you?"

"Don't," Paul advised.

"Then I won't," Ann decided. "Paul, I can't thank you enough—"

"After what you did for us? Stop it," he said gruffly.

THE road between Providence and Boston widened to four straight ribbons of concrete. Christopher Wain let his foot drop closer to the floorboard, and the huge motor throbbed beneath the battered hood. The needle crept to ninety; the car surged along the highway.

Christopher relaxed. Speed was a release to a crowded existence. At the moment he was on his way to confer with a group of New England industrialists, to give them a little advice—which would be very handsomely paid for—on certain new laws of the land.

He shifted his mind into blatant rationalization. There were issues to be met that were more important than the conference in Boston. For one thing, he should have left a check for Paul Freubel; the dog business was none too flourishing.

On sudden impulse, he slowed and pulled the car around. Half an hour later he drove up to the Freubel place. Paul came out from one of the bungalows and started toward the car, his face wreathed in smiles.

"Boy, am I glad to see you back!" Paul announced with utter candor. "You picked a swell show prospect in Gretel."

"I know it. I'm counting on putting her into the Puppy Sweepstakes. Here, I'll write out a check for her now."

Paul nodded, satisfied. "And how I need it!"

"Who was that girl who was here this morning?" Christopher asked, taking out his fountain pen.

"That was Miss Riversley."

"You known her long?"

"Never saw her until last night," Paul said. "And if it hadn't been for the way she jumped in to help, the

Ann felt sick. She got to her feet; she had only one desire—to get as far away as she could.

doc says he'd never have pulled Carol through. I gave her that other pup, Rowena. She just happened to take a shine to her."

"Is she still around?"

"No, she just left. Her car got fixed."

Christopher had a sudden sense of let-down, as if a shadow had crossed his inner being.

"Where does she live?"

"Don't know," Paul said. "Didn't think to ask her. All I know is she said she was going over to see what condition her farm was in, and then going on down to New York."

Christopher closed the fountain pen. "I'd like to wring your neck!" he said.

IT was Rowena's first trip in a car. Almost anything could have happened, but didn't.

Ann had already begun to have serious reservations about the whole thing. She tried to envision Rowena in her one-room New York apartment, and found herself faced with a constant procession of lamps, small tables and miscellaneous pottery commuting to the repair-shop. Her thoughts were distracted by the winding streets of New London, and then her slow progress was stopped entirely by one of the three-way intersections. Three-way intersections always got her down. There were too many arrows and lights and little squares that said WALK and Go. She crumpled, and decided just to stay put until something happened. But after a moment horns began to toot on all sides.

One particular horn blew loud and long from the car directly behind, and in the midst of the din, Rowena decided to add her voice to the controversy. There was an answering bark from some dog near by.

"Why don't you pull that piece of junk aside and let traffic move!" a masculine voice demanded.

Speechless with rage, Ann stuck her head out to look back. Then she saw who he was, and he saw who she was. And at the same instant Gretel and Rowena identified each other and began to yelp like a pair of separated orphans.

With a violent jerk, Ann started forward and safely made the turn. It was a straight road now, and she settled back in her seat. It occurred to her to wonder how the shabby young man in the rattletrap car had turned up again like a bad penny.

She made the abrupt cut-off toward Broadfields. When she swept into the driveway and followed it across the lawns, through the orchard to the barnyard, her heart sank. What a change in the place during the few short weeks that had elapsed since her last visit! Branches littering the ground and gullied sides of the road hit her like sharp reproaches.

She stopped against a stone wall, facing across the series of pastures and paddocks. Christopher Wain's car drew up beside her.

"I want to talk to you," he said, and swung out from beneath the wheel.

"If you want to sell me a dog," she interrupted crisply, "I'm not interested."

"I don't want to sell you a dog. I just want to talk to you."

"What about?"

"I don't know," he confessed blankly.

She kept a straight face with difficulty. "You just want to talk?"

He nodded. "That's it," he admitted gratefully.

Ann noticed suddenly the nice hollows in his cheeks. She was always a fool for hollows.

"Are you hungry?" she asked abruptly.

He did not answer at once.

"I am," she said.

"You're what?"

"Hungry. There might be enough food for both of us—"

"I'm ravenous!" he said.

The house had an unlived-in chill. "There'll be a fire laid in the library, and we can eat in there," she suggested.

"Fine!" Christopher said. "I'll go down to the farmer's cottage and get some milk and cream and eggs. . . . No, you stay here; I won't be long."

Gretel lay down with a gusty sigh before the fireplace; but Rowena, possessive and alert, slipped out with Ann.

Christopher, left alone, thrust his hands into his pockets and rocked on his heels. He whistled lightly and tonelessly between pursed lips. He prided himself on his legal ability to assemble all the salient facts of a situation, but he was a little puzzled at the moment. He looked about the room, and his eyes fell on shelves of law-books. Books by William Riversley. Of course! William Riversley, whose works on the theory of Constitutional law were guideposts in that field: he must be the girl's father. And he had died some several years back, leaving his daughter to manage an estate against a world of tumbling finances and of changing values. Christopher Wain relaxed. He felt that many of his questions had been answered.

He threw another log on the fire. This house was old, and beautiful. It had been built for living—and not for the hectic, meaningless kind of living that had gone on in his own crowd—or rather, Bertha's crowd.

He still called her by the homely old-fashioned name that she had worn when he fell in love with her four years ago in Vienna. It made her furious. "My name is Berta, please," she would remind him, her blue eyes cold and challenging. Berta Hali—what a little change from Bertha Haat—yet how utterly the few small letters had changed their entire life. All that was left of the first idyllic year was a Westchester monstrosity of stone and mortar which Bertha had so gleefully patterned after an Austrian chateau.

But this—this was the kind of home in which a marriage could form roots and grow, the kind of home he had wanted to have with Bertha.

ANN'S arms were full, and she was puffing as he opened the door for her. "I've got some bacon," she announced breathlessly. "Home-cured—you never tasted the like. How long does it take a drunken man to sober up?"

"Depends on how drunk. Why?" *(Please turn to page 74)*

REDBOOK'S RECORDS OF THE MONTH

Selected by
DEEMS TAYLOR

Serious:

"Don Quixote" Variations, by Richard Strauss: Played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy. Emanuel Feuermann playing the solo 'cello part. Victor Album M-720

The famous Strauss piece, complete with the notorious "sheep" passage, in a new and brilliant recording, with Feuermann doing a fabulous job with the 'cello title rôle.

Overture to "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini. Played by the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony, conducted by Howard Barlow. Columbia 70704D

The old warhorse prances again in a new and glittering harness.

Popular:

Foster Gallery, by Morton Gould. Played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra under Arthur Fiedler. Victor Album M-727

Stephen Foster would probably say, "Am I as good as that?" if he could hear this set of variations on some of his melodies. He was, and he is; and it is sufficient praise of this album to say that it is worthy of him.

Duke Ellington's Orchestra, playing "Chloe" and "Across the Tracks" Blues. Victor 27235

Now, about this Duke Ellington—oh, you know. It's Ellington. What more do you want?

Deems Taylor, one of America's leading composers and music critics, will select each month two or more records he believes our readers will enjoy playing.

CASEY and ROURKE take up Golf

By PARKE CUMMINGS

Illustrated by ALBERT DORNE

"Keep on trying. And don't lose count of your strokes."

A SHORT SHORT STORY

"WHAT do I do now?" said Rourke.

"See that red flag way off yonder?" said Casey. "Hit the ball at it. The flagpole is in the hole where you want the ball to go."

"You're crazy," said Rourke. "It's too far away. Nobody could hit the ball that far. Not even Babe Ruth."

"Don't talk foolish, Rourke! Nobody's saying you'll be hitting the ball in the hole the first shot. You have more than one shot at it."

"Ah!" said Rourke. "I know—three."

"Not three," said Casey. "This is not baseball. The object of golf, Rourke, is to be putting the ball in the hole, and not taking too many shots doing it."

"We're stupid to stand way back here. If we was to move up nearer the hole, it would take us fewer shots, Casey."

"Quit arguing," said Casey, "and hit the ball."

"I will, Casey. Watch."

"Keep your eye on the ball."

"I will, Casey."

"Put your feet a little closer together."

"Yes, Casey."

"And don't be wiggling your head like that, Rourke. Hold it steady."

"All right," said Rourke.

"Keep your club farther off your shoulder when you swing back."

"How about my trousers, Casey? Am I wearing them high enough?"

"Never mind the sarcasm," said Casey. "Do as I tell you."

"All them things to remember! Didn't you already tell me to hit the ball at the flag? Why would you be wasting my time with all those other things?"

"All right, all right!" said Casey. "Hit it."

"Watch, Casey, here goes. . . . Hey, the ball's no good. It's going crooked! Casey, it started straight, and then it went around the corner!"

"Sure, Rourke. You hooked it."

"That's a lie!" said Rourke. "Dinny Ryan said I could have it."

"No, no, Rourke. I mean you hit the ball wrong. You'll never make a golfer, Rourke—that's very plain to see."

"Let's see if you can be doing any better yourself, Casey."

"That I can," said Casey, "—even if I'm a bit out of practice. Watch, now."

"Ah!" said Rourke. "A very pretty pose that is."

"Quiet, Rourke!"

"It's a fine sight to see, Casey—the way you hold that club up over your shoulder."

"Quiet, I said!"

"It's a long way off that flag is, though."

"Rourke!" said Casey. "Don't be talking when I'm making a shot!"

"Why not?"

"It takes my mind off what I'm doing. It distracts me."

"You should be thinking of the ball," said Rourke, "and not what I'm saying."

"Don't talk ignorant, Rourke! In golf it's very bad manners to talk when the other man is making a shot."

"I'm sorry," said Rourke. "I didn't know that."

"All right. Now be quiet while I hit the—"

"Aa—choo!"

"Rourke! Don't be sneezing! I can't hit the ball when you make a noise like that!"

"I'm sorry," said Rourke.

"Very well. Quiet now, while—"

"It was a fly that tickled my nose, Casey. I couldn't help it."

"Will you be quiet and give me a chance to hit the ball?" said Casey.

"I was just trying to explain," said Rourke.

"Don't say a word now—"

"A funny thing, Casey, that there'd be flies out here—"

"Rourke!" said Casey, "I'll break this *(Please turn to page 86)*

THEY CALLED HIM Milli

The distinguished author of "Fame Is the Spur" explores the depths of total cruelty and utmost tenderness in this story of a German aviator and his mascot.

By HOWARD SPRING

THEY were living in a French chateau. Luxury for all of them. Some of them were mechanics from Hamburg. A few were countrymen, and there was a wine-merchant's clerk from Berlin. Not one of them had ever lived in such a place as this. The tarnished gilt mirrors of the great drawing-room; the dark portraits of bewigged ancestors in the dining-room; the ormolu and ice-cold crystal dripping of the chandelier: all this was so daunting that they talked very loud and stamped with their boots.

They would not have been there at all if the chateau were not near the airdrome. From the cellar there was a tunnel running underground and coming out in a corner of the field where the Dorniers and Messerschmitts were drawn up in the mild autumn weather. It was most convenient. When the British bombed the airdrome, they could run into the tunnel, which was deep and safe; and when there was a sudden call to man their machines, they could run through the tunnel to the airdrome. With everything so happily arranged, it was much nicer to sleep on the big deep beds of the chateau than in the huts on the field. No one knew why the tunnel had been built—no one except perhaps one of these people on the wall, with the rapiers, and the silver buckles to their shoes, and the foam of lace at the wrists, and the supercilious twist to the lips which suggested that, whatever they knew, they were not likely to give it away to these clumping invaders with the iron crosses dangling on their chests.

Along the front of the chateau ran a terrace, with urns spilling in this late month of the year red and gold and yellow leaves down to the stones worn by so many feet throughout so many generations. From the terrace the view was beautiful but limited. Down either side, and along the far end, horse-chestnut trees were planted; and between these stretched a lawn, with a narrow stone-edged pond running down the length of it. Reeds stood up in the water; here and there a satyr, a nymph, a cupid, raised a leaden figure among them.

Circumscribed, but very beautiful, especially to Hermann, who liked to come out there in the early morning, while the others were snoring, and walk on the terrace and imagine himself the lord of all that loveliness. When he was alone, he walked as softly as he could, trying to dumb the clump of his great boots, subdued by the opalescent, almost miasmic loveliness of the mist hanging upon the tapestried edges of the wood and over the green of the lawn and the leaden figures, cold with dew. It was a few hundred yards of enchantment, imprisoned there by the slow touch of the centuries; and Hermann would think of his flat in Berlin, with the chromium fittings which he had considered so beautiful and that now seemed mean and paltry. He would walk down the broad sweep of the steps from the terrace to the lawn, along the narrow pond—so narrow that he could have jumped it—his boots crushing the dewy grass; and from the far end he would look back at the face of the

"Remove that damned thing from the kitchen!" Julius shouted. "I am president of this mess and I order you."

chateau, with the sun struggling through the mist, laying upon it the first faint warmth of morning. It was a pale golden stone, like cheese.

On one of these morning walks Hermann found the hedgehog. At first he thought it was a bird. A movement among the leaves thickly coating the surface of the pond caught his eye, and the speckled object he saw faintly struggling in the water looked like a fat thrush. He moved toward it and saw that it was a hedgehog. Its rear end was sunk in the water. Its little black front paws were appealingly raised, and its black pointed snout was just clear of the sodden leaves.

Hermann put his hand delicately under the creature's belly and lifted it onto the grass. It feebly thrust out its spines, but quickly drew them in again, and a few drops of water oozed out of its mouth. A flea or two hopped from it, as though it were a host not worth patronizing any longer; and indeed it was an abject and pitiable creature, trying to roll itself up into a ball, but not quite succeeding. It looked as though its neck muscles were cramped. The head wouldn't tuck in. Almost, one would think, the neck was broken.

Hermann picked up the hedgehog with great tenderness. He had forgotten the chateau and its beauty, and the beauty of the autumn morning, and his flat in Berlin, and everything else. His mind could take in no idea but the idea of the hedgehog, and the probability that it had been in the pond for hours—perhaps all night. He was filled with a great pity. Perhaps the hedgehog's lungs were saturated with water. He imagined its struggles under the cold mist of the night to keep its snout in the air. The creature was shivering. A few more drops of water exuded from its mouth on to his hand, as though it were retching. "Poor thing! Poor little devil!" he murmured, and hurried into the chateau.

He had forgotten now to be silent, and his boots raised echoes as he went running upstairs. "Hey! Hans! Friedrich! Julius! Look! A hedgehog! The poor little devil's nearly drowned. I found him in the pond."

They crowded round, examining the wretched spiny bundle in Hermann's hand. The hedgehog gave an almost inaudible moaning grunt.

"Good!" Friedrich cried. "Did you hear that? He's alive!" He began to hurry into his clothes. "We must give him some warm bread and milk."

Only Julius was unmoved. "Throw the damn' thing back," he said. "They're always alive with fleas."

Hermann said: "You shut your mouth."

Julius said: "You shut yours, or I'll shut it for you."

They glared at one another for a moment, a boil of hatred surging up suddenly in Hermann's heart. "It's my hedgehog," he said at last quietly. "You needn't have anything to do with it. You *sha'n't* have anything to do with it."

Hans and Friedrich had dressed. "Come on, Hermann," they said. "Bring him down to the kitchen."

IN the kitchen the cook was moving lazily about, preparing breakfast. Hermann shouted at him angrily: "For God's sake, man, stir your lazy legs. Warm some milk."

The cook stiffened to attention: "Yes, Herr Leutnant."

"Look at him," said Hermann tenderly to Hans and Friedrich. "His eyes are open."

The black beads of the pig's eyes were just visible. Hans stretched out a finger to stroke the snout. "Carefully!" Hermann said. "Carefully!"

The cook dropped a saucepan lid; and the hedgehog, startled, rolled again into a ball and tried unsuccessfully to tuck in his head. "Damn and blast you for a clumsy fool!" Hermann raved. "Learn to move quietly."

Friedrich took the saucer of warm milk and crumbled some bread into it. Hermann placed the hog on the floor. It lay apathetically, its nose flaring feebly toward the smell of the bread and milk, but it was unable to move.

"This saucer is too high," Hermann cried. "He can't raise himself up to get his nose over the edge."

"Look! There's a flea coming out of him!" Hans exclaimed.

Hermann colored hotly and stood upright. "What's a flea?" he cried. "Is it a crime, then, to have a flea? You are as bad as Julius. Fleas are natural to hedgehogs! Put some of the soaked bread on the floor, by his nose. That saucer is too high in the edge."

Hans took some sops of bread and laid them on the ground near the hedgehog's snout. "Not on top of him!" Hermann cried

testily. "His nose is probably full of water. Do you want to smother him?" He eased the bread away infinitesimally.

"Now you'll see," he said.

But they did not see. The hedgehog lay on the ground, trying to raise itself on its front feet, and collapsing again and again. The cook spoke at last, deferentially: "I am taking up breakfast, Herr Leutnant."

Hans and Friedrich looked questioningly at Hermann. "Can't we leave him till after breakfast?"

"No. We can't. At least, I can't. D'you want the poor little devil to die of cold and hunger? Go on, if you want to."

They went, and Hermann stood frowning down at the hedgehog. The cook came back. "Here, you," said Hermann. "Take this fountain-pen filler and wash it out."

When this was done, he made the man hold the hedgehog and pry open its mouth with a pencil. Then, with the filler, he dropped warm milk into it. The hedgehog spewed feebly and shut its eyes.

"He's cold, Herr Leutnant. He wants warmth," said the cook. "I will get some dry bracken, and then perhaps you will leave him in it in a barrel here by the fire."

"Very good," Hermann said curtly. "Do it at once."

"Breakfast is not finished, Herr Leutnant."

"Do it at once."

The cook ran out.

"You'll be all right, old feller. You'll be all right," Hermann said to the hedgehog when the man was gone. He turned a corner of the rug over it, and went reluctantly upstairs.

JULIUS had already nearly finished his breakfast. He scowled toward Hermann. "I hope you've thoroughly washed after handling that filthy hedgehog."

"It's no more filthy than you are."

"Isn't it! It's got fleas."

"Probably you have too," said Hermann, gulping coffee.

Julius said: "I'll answer that insult later. Where's that damned cook?" He began to beat with his heavy boot on the floor, which was his way of making himself heard in the kitchen below. For a long time he battered without result. Then the cook came running, breathless. "I'm sorry. I was getting bracken for the Herr Leutnant's hedgehog."

His broad Bavarian face beamed with a smile as he added: "The hedgehog is now warm by the fire."

Julius picked up his coffee-cup and hurled it. The man ducked, and the cup shattered itself against the wall.

"Remove that damned thing from the kitchen!" Julius shouted. "I am president of this mess, and I order you. Remove it."

"But the Herr Leutnant—"

"I will not have the lousy thing contaminating the kitchen. To hell with the Herr Leutnant."

Hermann leaped to his feet, his face livid. "You dare, Müller, to speak to me like that before the cook! My God! You shall suffer for that! You are a beast. You have no love, no pity. Is not the poor thing perhaps dying?"

"What are you going to do about it?" Julius sneered.

Hermann relaxed. "Here—nothing. I cannot. You know that."

"Very well, then. Take your hedgehog out of the kitchen. Take it to bed with you. Do what you like with it. But take it out of the kitchen."

Julius went on out to the airdrome. The other three returned to the kitchen. Hermann lifted the bundle of bracken out of the barrel and uncovered the hedgehog. "Look!" he said. "His eyes are open. I think he knows me."

"You will have to take him out of here," said Hans. "Müller won't have it."

"The tool-shed is dry," said Friedrich.

"But is it warm?" Hermann demanded. "It is warmth he wants. Feel him now. Hold him in your hands. Do you think he is shivering?"

"Not so much as before," said Friedrich. "I think he will recover."

"I shall get an oil-stove from the quartermaster," said Hermann. "That will warm up the tool-shed. But I'll have to have some excuse."

"If the Herr Leutnant will pardon me," said the cook, "the cellar where the boots are cleaned is very damp. The leather gets to look quite moldy there." He came and bent over the hedgehog, which Friedrich had returned to Hermann's hands. He stroked its

Illustrated by
MAURICE BOWER

"Hans! Friedrich!" he shouted. "What happened? Did you get Willi out?"

snout with a fat finger. Hermann looked at him and smiled. "You understand these things, eh?" he said.

"I love all animals," said the cook. "I love all things that are small and helpless."

"Well," Hermann conceded, "that is only common sense. So do I. Now take him in the barrel to the tool-shed, and I'll see the quartermaster."

The quartermaster received sympathetically the idea that the boots in the cellar should be kept dry, and Hermann returned with the oil-stove and a can of kerosene. The tool-shed was built into an angle of the mellow brick wall that ran behind the horse-chestnut trees. It was rainproof but very damp, choked with old birch-brooms and lawn-mowers, hoes, rakes, spades. Hans and Friedrich were hanging about.

"We'll call him Willi," Hans said with a smile.

"Yes, it is a nice name," said Hermann, "and he must have a name. When he is better, we shall be able to make a pet of him. Perhaps he will follow us about."

"They can be trained to do so, Herr Leutnant," said the cook, who had not returned after carrying out the barrel. "I have known cases in Bavaria."

This seemed to please Hermann. He cleared a lot of rubbish out of the tool-shed, and lit the oil-stove. "This place is fearfully damp," he said. "We'd better not put Willi in it till it's been aired."

Then the cook and Hans and Friedrich went away, and while the shed was airing, Hermann carried Willi out onto the lawn. The day was beginning to have some heat. The mist was gone, and through the warm quiet air the leaves of the chestnut trees spun down, alighting on the grass and on the narrow strip of water. Hermann lay on a rug spread on the lawn, with the hedgehog in its bracken swaddling-clothes beside him in the glow of the sun. Lying on his back, Hermann looked up at the tender silken blue of the sky stretched above him like the canopy of a gorgeous tent, and the sun's warmth soaked into him, and he thought that he had not been so happy for a long time. He had rescued Willi from death; he was sure Willi would not die; and this created in his heart a feeling of happiness so profound that it astonished him.

He rolled over on to his stomach, tenderly parted the brown crackling parcel of bracken, and saw that the hedgehog was standing up—actually for the first time on all four feet, turning its head, its bright black-bead eyes, this way and that. He reached out his hand too impulsively, and Willi shut up into a ball, head tucked snugly in, no sign at all of an injured neck.

HERMANN'S heart gave a great leap of joy. He got to his feet, and stood for a moment looking down at the spiky ball as though he had witnessed a miracle of creation. "I have made him live!" his heart kept saying. "I have made him live!" Then he stooped, and wrapping the bracken round Willi, ran with him to the kitchen. "He is well! He is well!" he shouted, his eyes shining; and the fat Bavarian cook rubbed his hands and said "Ah-h!" with long satisfaction, as though he were congratulating a father on a first-born son.

"Now," he said, "now, Herr Leutnant, is the time to give him warm milk and bread. But at first, a little, very little."

Willi ate. They stood above him, watching him, hands on hips, now and then exchanging smiles of felicitation. Presently the hedgehog began to run across the floor. "Now I shall put him to bed," said Hermann. "The tool-shed will be warm."

"But he is well, Herr Leutnant. Let him run in the sunshine on the lawn," said the cook. "It is good to run in the sunshine."

"Fool!" said Hermann. "He has been in the water all night. Would you not want to be between blankets if you had been in the water all night? No; he must not overdo his strength."

"You are wise," said the cook. "Let me carry him to the tool-shed."

"No. I shall carry him myself."

He carried the hedgehog to the tool-shed, murmuring, "Good Willi! Brave Willi!"—full of joy and the love of the life he had saved. Then he went to tell the good news to Hans and Friedrich. *(Please turn to page 89)*

**A story of a girl in a big city—
and a stranger who sat beside her.**

SCREENO

Jo picked up Peter's hand and crossed two fingers. "Keep them crossed," she ordered.

ALWAYS, just a few minutes before closing-time, when the other girls in the office were fishing in their handbags for lipsticks and vanities, a nostalgia for places she had never seen except in books, a gnawing hunger to make of distant horizons a captured treasure, would come upon young Jo Oldpenny. Then she would do as she was doing now: She was staring out of the window watching the soul of the Hudson River stir to life in moving ships, gray-black spirals of smoke curling to the sky, and swooping white seagulls. She was no longer a secretary sitting at a desk. She was out there standing on the deck of one of the boats, with the wind dancing a wild tarantella in her hair, and the smell of the sea in her nostrils. She was bound for Monte Carlo, Paris, Cairo, Shanghai, in a treasure-hunt for high adventure.

Then reality announced itself in the clanging of the big clock, and the working-day was over. Jo sighed a little, and the dreaming went out of her big gray eyes. The wistfulness in her face strengthened into practicality, and once again she was the efficient bread-winner for a family.

On the way to the subway she saw a wagon filled with potted flowers. Her father loved flowers. Long before she had been born, he had been an artist. Even though he was a bookkeeper now, in a secret altar of his heart there lay a paint-splattered palette and the masterpiece which he had not been good enough to make real on canvas. Jo selected a pot with one cocky red geranium and little clusters of sleeping buds. She knew that its madcap gayety would please him.

Hugging the wrapped plant, she plopped her nickel and wiggled through the subway turnstile. She dashed for the crowded train, forced her way in just as the doors were closing and clutched a strap. People swayed against her, dug their elbows into her side, and almost threw the potted plant out of her hand. At last, the plant still safe after many tribulations, her station was reached. With the skill of long experience, she fought her way out.

She drew in long gulps of air outside, and walked briskly through the streets that led to the avenue on which stood the apartment-house in which she lived. She was panting by the time she climbed up the third flight. She had had a hard day at the office, and she was tired, and her feet ached. Still, it would never do to let her mother suspect how she felt. Her mother had a way of listening to the family's footsteps and uncannily determining each member's mood. Jo sat down on the landing and rested a few minutes. With a few flourishes of her powder-puff she freshened up her face. Then when she felt there was nothing about her appearance to worry her mother, she ran up the fourth flight, humming a popular song.

In answer to her particular signal, three short knocks, her mother let her in. Jo saw that her mother was wearing the flowered house-coat Jo had bought for her birthday, and which she had never liked. Jo, with a twinkle in her eye, knew that her mother wore it only on special occasions when she sought to please her. That usually meant she had misused the rent-money or neglected to pay the gas and electric bills, and this was her way of showing repentance. Jo wondered what she had done now.

As they passed the kitchen, Jo sniffed. She felt starved. There was no smell of cooking food. That meant delicatessen again. Jo hid her grimace. Her mother had probably spent the afternoon at the movies or at a bargain sale.

On the way through the small foyer to the living-room, Jo tripped over a pair of skates. She almost fell with the plant. A clutched door-knob saved her.

"Butch," called out Mrs. Oldpenny, "how many times have I told you to put your skates away in the closet?"

NIGHT

By

REBECCA KLANG

There was no answer.

Jo hurried into the small living-room. Her father was sitting in his favorite armchair near the open window. Although he was only in the late forties, recently his hair had begun to show streaks of gray. It always hurt Jo to see them. Jo adored her father.

"Hello, Dad," she said, and kissed him on the gray spot in his hair. "See what I got for you!" She unwrapped the plant.

William Oldpenny touched the plant tenderly with his long, slender fingers. He was not a demonstrative man. So he said: "You must have had some time lugging that thing in the subway." They both laughed.

"Had a hard time at the office, Dad?" Jo asked.

From one of the open bedrooms came her brother's voice. August yelled: "Say, Mom, where is my striped blue-and-white tie? I'm sure I put it in the third drawer. I bet Butch hijacked it again."

"Butch didn't take your tie this time. I'll find it." Mrs. Oldpenny hurried away. As she was leaving, she whispered: "I hope he doesn't notice that Butch is wearing his green one."

The door slammed excitedly.

"April must be feeling happy about something," said Mr. Oldpenny. To him the door was the emotional weathercock of the family.

In bobbed eighteen-year-old April. She was pretty; she had honey-colored ringlets and cheeks that flushed pink when she was pleased. She was carrying a new hat-box and a dress-box. It was four days before her pay was due, and she usually was broke by then. Jo suspected why her mother was wearing that flowered housecoat. April probably had had a very special date with her Jim, and had cajoled her mother into another financial capitulation.

April cast a guilty little glance at Jo, and sat down on her father's lap. "I bought the loveliest outfit, Dad!"

Mr. Oldpenny stroked April's head. She was so young, so impulsive, and so unfit for the hard wear and tear of life. One had to shield her. For Jo he was not afraid: nothing in life could defeat the indomitable courage and white honesty of her soul.

"Better try on the duds before Jim comes," Jo said. "There may be a hemline I'll have to shorten."

April flung her arms around Jo's neck. "You're a darling, Jo," she said. "I told Mother you'd understand. You always do."

She danced away.

"I'm going to take a shower," Jo said to her father.

The bathroom is the citadel for the members of a large city family, the only place where a person of a crowded household knows the sweet privacy of really being alone. There he can think his problems through, and cry or laugh without the tears or the laughter being questioned. To get into it, requires the strategy of a master diplomat.

Jo knocked at the bathroom door. There was no answer, yet the door was locked and the faucets were running.

Nineteen-year-old August rushed over. On his arm dangled his precious tie. "I come before you," he told Jo. "I've been trying to get into that bathroom for the last half hour, to shave. I have a date this evening with a charming young lady." He glanced out of the corner of his eye to see if Jo was impressed. Jo was properly impressed. "I wonder what Butch is doing with Patches in there. He can't be bathing him *again;* he's bathed him twelve times this week! Something must be bothering Butch."

Mrs. Oldpenny joined them, and a family conference of war was held outside the closed door. Then Mrs. Oldpenny called: "Bradford, you come right out!"

Something crashed inside. Then the door was flung wide open. Twelve-year-old Bradford, who had assumed the "Butch" for self-preservation, came out. Something trotted at his heels.

"I was just there a minute," he said indignantly. Butch was tall and lanky, and had grown in a hurry. His suit could not keep pace with him, and protested at the wrists and elbows.

Then Patches, the speckled dog, still wet from his most undesired and highly resented bath, shook himself.

August sniffed. His face became agonized.

"You broke my after-shaving lotion, and I paid a dollar for the bottle," he thundered at Butch. He forgot his painfully assumed maturity, which he had sought to emphasize by the bit of down carefully fostered on his upper lip. He lurched for Butch, who ducked under his arm. Then from a safe spot he said: "I just used a teeny bit. The rest spilt when Patches wiggled. I broke the bottle when Mom told me to get out."

"I'm going in next," August told Jo. "I've waited long enough."

"Make him let me go in first," countercomplained Jo.

"Settle that yourselves," said Mrs. Oldpenny, and left.

BUTCH came back. He thrust something into August's hand. August saw that it was Butch's boy-scout knife, the pride of his heart.

"You can have it," Butch said, and tried hard to keep his lips from quivering. Despite his height, he was a little boy. "I didn't mean to break the bottle."

August said: "Forget it. I've been trying to get rid of that stuff. I only put on an act before Mother."

"You mean it?" asked Butch. August nodded, but his eyes surveyed the broken bottle. Butch trotted happily away.

August turned to Jo: "I'll let you go in first. Lend me two dollars. Honest, I'll pay you back as soon as I get a job. I'd hate to feel short on my date. It would get around, and the boys would never stop ribbing me." August hated asking Jo for money. Everyone was always asking her.

He was five years younger than she, and yet Jo felt very much older. It wasn't so very long ago that he was a kid clinging to her arm whenever they came to crossings. Now he went to girls' houses, and somebody's parents worried if he would make their little girl happy. . . . Jo gave him the money.

As she closed the door, Jo heard August crooning a swing tune. His voice was husky, deep, and full of haunting overtones. Too bad there wasn't enough money to train his voice. It had great possibilities.

The stinging shower filled Jo with renewed vitality and a sense of well-being. It was glorious to be at peace in four walls that belonged exclusively now to herself. All the wild, restless longings in Jo Oldpenny came out and made themselves at peace in her oasis. She was this and she was that. Not for her the quiet street of uneventful living, with its petty hecklings and problems; she walked from mountain peak to mountain peak in her dreaming.

Then came her mother's knock, and her voice said: "May I come in?"

Jo glanced a little regretfully about her ivory tower and said, "Come right in, Mother."

Mrs. Oldpenny entered. Sometimes she looked like Butch in a moment of penance. Despite her forty-two years, she looked like him now. Her short curly hair and the childlike quality in her eyes gave her an air of perpetual youth, and Jo knew that time would never be able to touch it. Jo knew that her mother was different from most

Illustrated by
MORTIMER WILSON, JR.

of the mothers of her friends. Their mothers were practical, knew how to budget themselves wisely and thriftily. They were always watching the scales to make sure no one was cheating them. Her mother trusted the whole world. She relied on her dealers, and their cheating never occurred to her. Surprisingly enough, no one ever cheated her. Instead, all the trades-people adored her and protected her interests. She was a friendly soul, and fond of people. People could not help coming to her with their problems.

Mrs. Oldpenny hesitated. She knew that she had done wrong, that she was thrusting too many responsibilities on her oldest child's shoulders. She hated to do it. Yet her husband was too impractical. So she had to lean on Jo.

"I spent half of the rent-money," said the mother.

"For April's new outfit?" The last time it had been a new suit for August.

Mrs. Oldpenny started. Sometimes she was a little afraid of her daughter's understanding.

Jo had been saving for a fur coat for the last three years. She had never owned one. Something always happened to interrupt the saving. The amount she had saved now would just meet the rent deficit.

"I'll give you the money, Mother," Jo said, and managed to smile.

Always at moments like this, she remembered a childhood incident. She had been about eight when her mother had bought her a pair of black slippers. Three days later all the shoe-stores in the neighborhood had displayed colored sandals, red, and blue and green, colors to brighten the heart of any little girl. She knew that she had no right even to mention those colored shoes. Her mother had found her staring at the displayed sandals, and she had taken her hand and led her in. "I have some money," she said, and bought her a pair of red sandals. Those red sandals would live forever in Jo's memory; and they explained that quality in her mother which could not leave a child's yearning unanswered.

AFTER dinner the family went into the living-room. August left for his date. Later Mr. Oldpenny went to play chess at a friend's house. Butch squatted on the hassock near the radio and turned it on full blast to an adventuresome tale of explorers and hostile jungle tribes.

"Jim is coming soon," said April, and in her voice was a little nudging hint.

Mrs. Oldpenny had a collection of newspapers on an end table near her. She was catching up on her reading. She followed all the romantic serials in her favorite newspapers. She looked up.

"Butch," she said, "it's lovely downstairs. Why don't you go down and play with your friends?"

"Say," exploded Butch, "why do you try to get rid of me every time the girls bring home a beau? Where am I supposed to go? Isn't it bad enough I have to sleep on the living-room couch? A man just hasn't any rights in this house."

"Bradford!" said his mother. Then with softened eyes she said: "I went to the movies today to try and win a bicycle, a much nicer one than your friend Tommy Flannagan just got from his uncle. I lost by one number. Tomorrow I'm going to try again."

Butch arose. "It's hot in here," he announced in the voice of a discoverer making history. "I'm going down."

Jo felt the walls of the stuffy room closing in on her. It was too hot to try and sleep in the small bedroom she shared with April. Yet there was that distress in April's eyes. Then Jo remembered what she had forgotten: That night they had "screeno" at the neighborhood movie house. Monte Carlo lay right around the corner.

The movie house is the pulse of a neighborhood, a place of refuge, a captured argosy. There the same price of admission levels all rentals, all heartaches, all yearnings. That was why it could happen there that Wednesday evening that Jo Oldpenny, child of New York and heiress to a strap in the subway and a tray in a cafeteria, should be seated next to young Peter Onslow, heir apparent to a small-town duchy in the west.

Jo never noticed Peter. The magic of screeno night was upon her, and forgotten was the alpaca apron of her everyday self.

Peter never noticed Jo either. One of the brunettes in the feature reminded him of Mildred, a girl back home whom he would probably marry some day. This was his first day in New York. Peter was homesick for the distant, friendly, known faces; he had not been prepared for the sudden uprooting by his father, who had sent him to work in the bank of a New York friend. It had been late afternoon when he had checked in at the hotel his father had recommended. After dinner, he had taken a walk through the strange streets; then seeing the familiar landmark of the big neighborhood movie house, he had come in.

The houselights flashed on, and screeno began. Jo's fingers bit into the screeno card. Spinning hands whirled on the screen. Numbers were called out. Jo marked a few isolated figures on her card. Then ringing through the tensed, electrically charged hush came hallelujah cries of, *"Screeno!"*

In customary disappointment Jo slumped into her seat. She never grudged another's winnings. The hangover of their victory fired her sporting blood, and tonight there was a jackpot of one hundred and fifty dollars for someone to win. Jo sighed, and then casually looked over her shoulder at the screeno card of the person on her right. She tensed, gaped. On the card five diagonal numbers had been crossed. Impulsively Jo gripped the man's sleeve.

"You've won screeno!" Jo gasped. "Hurry up, join the others. You won in the first seven spins, and you can get part of the jackpot."

Peter Onslow, floundering in alien moorings, turned a startled face and looked right into the gray eyes. He kept on staring. The Onslows were chronically truthful. Peter said, "I don't like going up on a platform and having strangers stare and talk about me."

Jo snapped: "Don't be silly. They won't eat you. Who are they? Go up there!"

Peter's reticent small-town soul shuddered at being on display as an added attraction to critical strangers. He shook his head.

From the platform the manager announced: "We have six winners of the jackpot tonight. This is very unusual. We'll divide the money."

"Say," called someone out from the audience, "why don't they all pick from the board, and the one who gets the highest number gets the whole jackpot. That's more fun than dividing it."

There was a consultation. The winners agreed.

The manager said, "We'll get a new board up here with blank ovals. Hanging with them will be one oval whose back will be marked $150. Whoever picks that, gets the whole jackpot." The audience stamped approval. "Otherwise the money will be divided—if no one wins."

What a challenge, Jo was thinking—when a hand shyly touched her arm.

"You can have my card, miss. Please take it."

It was not the offer that placated Jo. It was the eagerness with which he offered it to her. He seemed like an apologetic little boy with his corn-colored hair and blue eyes, which were bluer than any other man's eyes she had ever seen. He was different. Most of the men she knew wore self-assurance like a chip on the shoulder.

Suddenly Jo offered: "I'll go up there for you. But I warn you, I'm just not lucky that way."

Peter Onslow, plunged out of known waters, grinned. "Your luck is good enough for me."

Jo smiled. She picked up Peter's hand and crossed two fingers. "Keep them crossed," she ordered. Then she was gone.

Peter saw the gray-eyed girl again as she stood with six other people on the platform to compete for the jackpot. In the glare of the spotlight she was little and slim, and her short curly hair danced out in impish golden-brown ends.

Jo's heart thumped as her turn grew nearer, she being the last, and still no one had won the jackpot. Tonight she wanted to win as she had never wanted to before, and it was because a blue-eyed boy had thought her luck good enough for him.

At last it was her move. Jo faced the large board square where seventeen ovals hung tantalizingly. One of them bore the jackpot figures on its back. "Give a gal a break," Jo breathed to Lady Luck, and picked. The manager, master of ceremonies, took the oval out of the girl's shaking hands. He held it up to the audience, who began to shout. Lady Luck, it seemed, could be a good sport on occasions. Marked in black figures on the oval was *"$150."*

The manager filled her hands with greenbacks. He was pleased; this impressed the audience more than if he would have had to divide it amongst several if no one had won.

"To what do you owe your luck?" he asked.

"To the man sitting next to me," Jo said without thinking. Then as the audience began to laugh, Jo blushed at the unexpected significance of her words, and in confusion ran off the stage.

"Now let that be a lesson to you, girls," said the manager, "to always bring the boy friend along for luck on screeno nights."

A very crimson Jo found her aisle, for there was a great craning of necks to see the man seated next to her. By the time screeno was over and the feature on, Peter was red too.

"We'd better leave together," said Jo.

Peter nodded.

LATER, as they walked up the street, Jo gave Peter the money.

Peter said: "At least half of that money is yours."

Jo protested, but Peter made her take the money. Yet after she had put away her half in her purse, they both lingered on the street-corner.

Jo knew her good-night would be good-by, and she would never see this blond boy again. Her life had been full of such little episodes that had begun with the picturesque glare of a bursting Roman candle and had ended with the futility of its sputter. There was a quiet look in this boy's eyes that said he wanted to know her better. City-wise, experience-scarred, Jo realized that some men hog-tied their lives with too strong knots of accepted behavior, and wondered why the knots held so when they tried to loosen them. Women knew better. Yet rather than lose caste in the eyes of such men, they made of a bitter, voluntary exile, a gayly colored pocket handkerchief waving *bon voyage*. So Jo, with her heart aching, said blithely: "Good-night."

Peter just saw her standing there and ready to walk out of his life forever. He forgot *(Please turn to page 103)*

His ancestor had founded a town in the wilderness because of a sunset on a hill. He would take a chance on the dawn in a girl's gray eyes.

The Case of the JET BLACK SHEEP

Dr. Colin Starr—and a devoted wife who was ready to die, if her husband wanted to kill her.

BY RUFUS KING

Illustrated by ELMORE BROWN

THE house was old, and Madam Tuffman was old too. Her title fell under the curious and stilted reaching for correctness which her circle in the community considered so important, perhaps, because they were not quite sure of themselves. As it was, she was a widow, and her son Ernest had married a Bertha Wollodon, who had become Mrs. Tuffman; and Mrs. Tuffman had been dowagered into Madam.

This amused her considerably, and her alive dark eyes would become more lively still at its use, because she would remember the days that were not (to her) so very far ago, when she and her pioneer contemporaries were so active with the processes of rearing and feeding and living that any straining after social minutiæ was greeted with suspicious laughter.

She had had two daughters and four sons; and all of them were dead except Ernest, who was the one black sheep of the lot: a charming and lowering example of the truism that the good die young.

Her house was a roomy and authentic specimen of the clapboard-and-fretwork blight and had originally possessed extensive grounds, the largest portion of which had since been absorbed by the Laurel Falls Country Club, and appropriately greened and hazarded into links. It retained, however, several acres of this hilled and valleyed section of Ohio, and you could have a charming view of the town itself, and segmentary glimpses of the Onega River, from either of its frightening turrets.

Its furnishings had not advanced with the day. Its lighting fixtures were still amazed to find their pipes wired to terminals which flowered into the black magic of incandescent bulbs, and as an offshoot from the parlor, it possessed that extinct adjunct to the wooden Indian, a cozy corner.

Slight twinges in her joints had made Madam Tuffman feel—she had said—that she was getting on. They had started shortly under a year ago, and she had instigated a series of monthly professional calls on the part of Dr. Colin Starr: a comfort she could well afford, for Edgar, her late husband, had left her enormously rich, from a knack on his part in the manufacture of box-toed shoes. Colin's father had been Madam Tuffman's physician until his death, following which she had called upon Colin during the rare moments when she had not felt quite well.

When the dangerous turn of events forced him to look back over his files, Starr later remembered his first visit for this specific ailment of Madam Tuffman very clearly. She had received him in dark bombazine in her private upstairs living-room, which was freighted with shadow-boxed landscapes and tufted plush.

The afternoon had been a Wednesday, the 11th of September, and leaves were tending toward their first dark flush of autumn. Madam Tuffman had thought of Starr as a vigorous breath of the outdoor air as he crossed the stuffy room toward the large bay window where she sat; and she had caught his electric vitality as he joined her. She experienced, too, a tonic quality just from his bodily strength and homely features, and she regretted the necessity of withdrawing her fragile fingers from his comforting hand.

She said, "It's nothing but twinges, Doctor," and gestured tentatively toward several anatomical locations.

Starr smiled at her reassuringly and talked nonessentials while he took her blood-pressure and listened to her heart and gravely requested permission to examine her tongue.

All was as it should be for a woman of her age, which he knew to be seventy-four. He thought: "I wonder why she really sent for me, what she really wants?" He discussed her diet, or rather her total lack of any, and suggested that she cut down a little on wine: a dry Tokay she was partial to, having found its use less deleterious than water. She accepted the suggestion reservedly. He wrote out an innocuous prescription for the tweaks and began the courteous preliminaries of taking his leave; but he did not stand up, because he suddenly caught a sense of anxiety on her part for him to stay.

She said: "Have I told you that Ernest is home?"

"I had heard."

"Then you know that he got married while in Hawaii? I like her: Bertha. She's a little thing. Not anemic, but well, not robust. She was born in Honolulu. Her parents were English, and ranched either pineapples or sugar."

Madam Tuffman's lively eyes grew veiled. She grimaced faintly and made a small deprecatory gesture; then she said: "My presence at the wedding was entirely by cable. I expected something exotic. I suppose you always do in connection with places like Hawaii. Not at all the sort of girl that Bertha really is. I prepared."

"Prepared?"

"FOR the homecoming." Madam Tuffman leaned forward and said: "I wanted to keep him here. To keep both of them here. I tried to arrange their room as a bridge, as a link."

"Between the Islands and Ohio?"

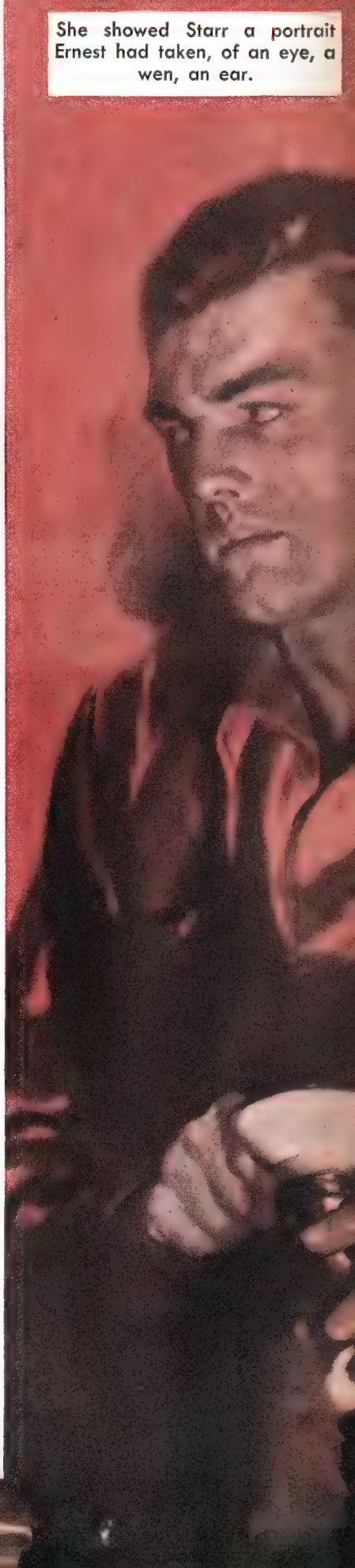
"Yes, Doctor. After Edgar made his money, we did a little looting of Europe. That was a long time ago, before the turn of the century. It was a magpie rather than a grand tour. The attic is still cluttered with cases that have never been opened. I remembered certain things, and thought that they would fit."

"For the room?"

"Yes. There were some good lacquer pieces, an excellent China rug, all very vivid in vermilions and heady tones. Then there was the paper for contrast."

"Wallpaper?"

"A hand-blocked, lush design done by an artist in London's Soho. I think he was mad. Both of them—Edgar to buy it, and the artist to make it in the first place. The design is a plethora of fantastic huge leaves of the most vivid green. I remember that the color glowed from a single candle lighted in the studio. The artist was especially proud of the fact that he had mixed the pigments himself." Madam Tuffman grimaced again, adding: "So we unpacked the rolls from their case and put it up."



She showed Starr a portrait Ernest had taken, of an eye, a wen, an ear.

"It was not a—success?"

She stared at Starr for a thoughtful moment.

"I don't know. Bertha was very kind. She professed to be delighted. Well—I suppose it will require a certain amount of time for her to get acclimated. They've only been here a few weeks."

"Then they have decided to stay?"

"I think yes. I hope yes. But I still find it somewhat unbelievable in Ernest, this sudden urge toward nesting. He resembles his Great-uncle Stuart. Both of them ran away from home at the age of sixteen. Stuart rolled on straight through his seventies, eventually dying of exhaustion at the Hotel Bruschini in Tamave, Madagascar. Well, Ernest is only thirty, and still—well, here he is."

"Perhaps because he is married?"

YES, Madam Tuffman said, there might be an answer there. Great-uncle Stuart had shied at altars like a sensitive colt. But marriage, just as marriage, scarcely seemed ponderable enough as an anchor for such a rolling-stone as Ernest. She knew Ernest so very well. She loved him so much, perhaps because he was her youngest and, for his sins, the only one of her children who was left. She supposed that with time she would grow to love Bertha a good deal too. Her lively dark eyes fixed Starr sharply, and she said: "I feel no jealousy, Doctor. It isn't that."

"I'm sure it isn't, Mrs. Tuffman."

"And it isn't that Bertha doesn't want to love me. I think she does. I think she is uncertain about something—about happiness. Will you meet her before you go?"

"I should like to very much."

Madam Tuffman stood up.

"We will join them in the cellar."

And Madam Tuffman explained, as they walked down waxed walnut stairs carpeted with an imperishable Turkey red, that Ernest was currently absorbed with photography, and was planning to open a studio in Laurel Falls and make it his life work.

Ernest had had, she went on, so many life works, starting as a boy with raising squabs, birds which had gradually been consumed by the family circle in ratio as his interest in the pursuit had waned. Chemistry, magic, portrait-painting, a bewildering and swift succession of interests that had culminated in a passion for the sea at sixteen, when he had run away and had shipped out of Boston on an Atlantic Fruit Company freighter for the West Indies. He had seemed to tire of his enthusiasms so quickly, which was why Madam Tuffman didn't know about this one.

The darkroom occupied a portion of the large cellar usually reserved as a storage-place for winter vegetables. Pale lemon light through a safety filter left it vague, as things are vague when you open your eyes while swimming under the sea. The faces of both of them were washed with the tint lightly, both bending over a tray. Starr had never met either, and Ernest Tuffman's good looks and magnificent build registered immediately, distracting his attention from Bertha, whom Ernest's appearance and the safety filter rendered wraithlike and ethereally obscure.

It was a strange meeting, strange beyond even its setting, and brief. Ernest was glad to be home, very satisfied at settling down with a wife, with a background, with a mother, and with an ancestral estate, at last. Starr sensed that all of this gladness was implied by Ernest, rather than being baldly stated, as if it were a wish rather than a reality: a generally benign condition of affairs which Ernest hoped, very much, would come true.

In contrast, Bertha seemed impelled by a peculiar eagerness, a directness to impress Starr and (through him) Madam Tuffman and Ernest as well. She was emphatic that she did not miss Hawaii at all, that this absolute uprootal of her life—her years couldn't, Starr decided, have been more than twenty—and a subsequent transplanting several thousands of miles away with a continent and a vast space of Pacific Ocean in between, was entirely to her liking.

She touched with earnest graciousness on the link: the room which Madam Tuffman had so considerately arranged with its bright lacquers and hand-blocked wallpaper leaves so lush in their vivid green. The thoughtfulness of it. The consoling accuracy of its effect. A home from home. To awake every morning and lie there, absorbing that brilliant emerald paradise. Had Doctor Starr heard that an artist in London had conceived it ages ago? Doctor Starr had.

She was, too, insistently enchanted with Laurel Falls; shortly, she said, Ernest would renew his boyhood ties and they would get around a little socially, and would start to entertain, as Ernest's mother wished them to. Then she showed Starr a print, lifting it from the fixing-bath, of a portrait which Ernest had taken, Starr reflectively observed, on an eight-by-ten sheet, of an eye, a wen, an ear.

Ernest said brusquely, "Our gardener," and Starr said, "Remarkable," and Bertha said brightly, "It settles so, don't you think, on the things that are really important?"

Madam Tuffman said nothing except (in reply to Starr) good-by.

A MONTH later Madam Tuffman phoned again. She told Starr's secretary, Miss Wadsworth, that the tweaks seemed still to be there and she would appreciate it if Dr. Starr would call. On his way to this second visit Starr still considered that a mild arthritic or rheumatic condition might be setting in, but when he heard again a listing of the twinges and their obscure locations, he dismissed the probability from his thoughts. He wanted, as was his custom, to be perfectly frank and tell Madam Tuffman that she was wasting both her money and his time, but the strength of some deep emotion which lay beneath the liveliness of her dark eyes prevented him.

So he suggested that she give his former prescription a further chance, being uncomfortably aware that she appreciated its pathetic innocuity but was grateful for its value as an excuse (yes, he thought, that was it) to bring him into the house. He realized later that it was then, at that moment, when a tacit understanding sprang up between them that the twinges would remain, and that he would dose Madam Tuffman with the most shameless simples whenever she wanted him to come.

"Mrs. Tuffman, we frequently

She said after this arrangement was so psychically settled upon: "You will think me a doting parent, Doctor. Unfortunately, I am. A man once read the bumps on Ernest's head when he was a child, and said that there was nothing that Ernest couldn't do. Sort of a Carlylean possession of a fixed capacity which could be turned with equal success into any channel Ernest might choose. The latest proof seems to be golf. Ernest never played before, but he has practically lived on the links during the past month—he and Bertha."

"And photography? The studio in town?"

"Oh, that! At least we can store winter apples and potatoes in the cellar again. It seems that Ernest is already much better at the game than Bertha, who has golfed for years in Honolulu."

"Evidently a natural talent. I wish I possessed it."

"In fact, Ernest is almost as good as that Mabel Hoplin divorcée; and she, I understand, approaches being professional. I continue to refer to golf."

defeat our own ends. You cannot be a constant mirror. And men tire of their own reflections."

"They play together?"

Madam Tuffman looked vague.

"Bertha tells me so." Her eyes were once more penetratingly lively. "Bertha wanted him to. It seems that the change in climate has made her tire easily."

"That's a comforting thing about climates. You can attribute any ailment whatever to them with impunity."

"So I have found." Madam Tuffman fingered an inconsequential handkerchief deeply bordered with Brussels lace. "Are you by any chance golfing at the club this afternoon, Doctor?"

He said, after a moment: "Yes, Mrs. Tuffman. I am."

Starr did some telephoning after he left, and managed to arrange a foursome for five o'clock. He reached the clubhouse shortly before four. He found Bertha Tuffman seated on its glass-enclosed southern veranda reading a book for which she had made a plain paper dust-cover. He suggested cocktails or tea.

"Tea, if you don't mind, Doctor." Starr gave the order to a waiter, and Bertha said: "I simply don't drink. It's a habit that's missing in me constitutionally. . . . I do like your course here."

"Have you finished for the day?"

"I found nine holes enough." Her voice stayed charmingly bright. "I'm continually expecting Ernest to divorce me for a dynamo. He's indefatigable."

Starr equably shook out the climatic change between Honolulu and Ohio, and Bertha gratefully agreed that her lessening spryness was, of course, due to that. Shortly, on almost any tomorrow, she would be feeling herself again. Not that she was ill. Her laughter at this absurdity was gay and clear. She would concede brief moments of nostalgia, moments when she would lie on the rattan *chaise-longue* of their bedroom and fancy, while her eyes played among the wallpaper's tropical pattern of strong green leaves, that she was back in her childhood of Hawaii. But such moments swiftly passed. No, it wasn't any illness, it was simply that she wanted to live as fully as Ernest did, to be not only a helpmeet but a team-mate as well, while Ernest sprinted with his boundless bravura along his kaleidescopic succession of tracks.

BERTHA said, again, that she wanted to live. Leaving the statement, this time, quite flat. Then she stood up abruptly and said, while her smile grew set and strained, that she would be right back.

Starr sat and observed through glass panes the eighteenth hole, toward which Ernest Tuffman and Mabel Hoplin (the *amateur* in divorces) were so springily walking, trailed by their flushed and sweated caddies. Then the club's perennial débutante paused at his table—an Ethel Sweetloss, starved down into the Misses and eye-shadowed into a mauve version of Mimi's penultimate gasp in "La Bohème."

Miss Sweetloss said, huskily: "Why the dust-cover, Doctor? Brushing up on some extracurricular techniques with the knife?"

Starr broke loose from his abstraction and stood up. He saw that Miss Sweetloss had opened the book which Bertha had been reading. He recognized the work as one of the better anthologies on famous murders. He managed to smile back at Miss Sweetloss as he took the book from her hand.

"Just a busman's holiday, Miss Sweetloss—among the cyanides and the more scarlet fields of human behavior." . . .

The successive visits did not, at the time, seem significant. Starr missed meeting Bertha or Ernest during all of them, as both were involved in a full swing of

social activities. Over and above their fictional base of twinges, a *précis* of the visits simply bulked largely with Madam Tuffman's opinion that Bertha was very deeply in love with Ernest.

Madam Tuffman pointedly made something special of the fact, as if she wanted Starr to realize that it was not an ordinary love in just an affectionate or a biological sense, but that it had a devotional flavor, like a half-portion of the more notable examples such as *Romeo* and *Juliet:* a half-portion in that Madam Tuffman didn't seem so sure about Ernest as a prototype for the party of the second part. And neither, she had sensed, did Bertha.

But then, you never could tell about Ernest. Madam Tuffman had never been able to and she doubted whether anyone else ever could, even a wife. He lowered so, like thunder, and then could be gentle as a zephyrean coo from a dove. She supposed it was the trouble with having loose dynamite in his veins instead of blood. The lamb!

Golf, of course, had long been discarded as an accomplished fact, and Mabel Hoplin had as cavalierly been discarded with it. The latest flame on the horizon was a sloop. Something in the nature of Jack London's *Sea Wolf*, in which Ernest would install Bertha and (if Madam Tuffman wished—but she didn't) his mother, and away with it all to some black-flied tropical hell in the South Atlantic.

IT was a midsummer visit which definitely served as an overture to the affair's desperate end.

Madam Tuffman believed that Bertha was going to have a child. She intended to bring Bertha to Starr's office on the following day, for his opinion. From her own exhaustive fund of personal experience, Madam Tuffman was satisfied with the symptoms, which included, among other trivia, moody fits of a temperamental melancholy. Bertha had increasingly kept to her room, the complimentary papering of which Madam Tuffman now considered a mistake, for it seemed to be getting on Bertha's nerves. She had overheard Bertha muttering fiercely to herself: "The leaves—*the twining leaves.*"

Oddest, she thought, was Bertha's fixity of diet (again the temperamental quirk) which leaned almost exclusively toward eggs, boiled, and served at the table in their shells. These Bertha ate with bread; and as for liquids, the girl drank nothing at all during meals, but would refresh herself afterward (Madam Tuffman had determined this from observation) with plain water from a tap.

Finally, when not involved with one of her fits of melancholia, Bertha would swing to an extreme of hectic gayety, or would disclose her devotion for Ernest with depths that were embarrassingly uncomfortable both for Ernest and for Madam Tuffman. As for what a baby would do—well, what would it do? Would it bind Ernest to his wife, to his home? To any sort of normal regularity? Or would it gall as a second chain?

Starr did, on this occasion, meet Bertha. She was standing on the porch as he left the house, with her attractive small face very clear in the light of a declining sun. He was shocked at her appearance. It had a subtly unhealthy look which was significant to his practiced eye. Bertha brightened as she saw him.

"It's good to see you again, Doctor."

"Thank you. I've missed you, too."

"We've been involved. In full swing. I know now what the tail of a comet must feel like."

"I'm told that a sloop is the very latest."

"It was—but always, Doctor, something new; now it is dancing; Ernest never danced in Honolulu."

"What changed his mind?"

"The ties of his youth changed it for him, I suspect. All blondes."

"*All* blondes?"

$750.00

for a story written by an undergraduate

THE Editors of REDBOOK will purchase as an "Encore of the Month" at least one story which has appeared in a North American college publication during the scholastic season of 1940-1941. They will pay for the right to reprint that story in REDBOOK five hundred dollars to the author, and two hundred and fifty dollars to the college publication in which it first appeared.

Each entry must be submitted before July first, 1941, by the editorial board of the publication in which it appeared, to Collegiate Story Contest, Redbook Magazine.

Bertha brightly ran through a brief roster, all of whom Starr knew, and all of whom were definitely blondes. She shook her russet hair and said: "It has made me thoughtful on the subject of peroxide."

"Too permanent, I'd say. I'd favor a wig. Remember that you're dealing with a highly changeable substance."

"Yes, I do remember, Doctor."

"You're coming to my office tomorrow."

He had rarely, he reflected, seen such a swift, such an evanescent flash of fear.

"Ernest's mother knows about the baby, Doctor?"

"She suspects. Does Ernest?"

"No. And please—I shall ask his mother to say nothing, and let me ask it of you, Doctor—to say nothing to him."

"Of course."

"Thank you, Doctor."

STARR assured Bertha gravely as to the baby, while he thought: "There is a horror in this that strikes more deeply than I can see. I think she knows. That is the truly damnable part about it—I think she knows." He felt Madam Tuffman's lively old eyes turned on him watchfully from her armchair beside a window in the office. They were as deliberate in their fixity as Bertha's eyes were evasive.

He said to Bertha: "Concerning your diet—"

"Yes, Doctor?"

"I understand you lean somewhat exclusively toward eggs?"

"Yes, Doctor."

He studied her averted face for a while.

"Served, I believe, in their shells?"

"A habit of childhood, Doctor."

"You eat just eggs?"

"No—plain bread—no butter, Doctor."

Starr smiled at Madam Tuffman and said: "You have kept your house so much in period that I suppose even the butter is still molded with wooden presses into individual pats?"

MADAM TUFFMAN'S eyes grew impersonal.

"Rosettes, a clover, and one rather rare one, Doctor, of a little cow."

Starr turned again to Bertha.

"How long have you been restricting yourself to this diet?"

"I think since I've known about the baby."

Madam Tuffman said sharply: "No, longer—much longer."

"Perhaps. Yes, Doctor, for a while longer."

"Hasn't the monotony of it affected your appetite?"

"I'm never really hungry."

(Faint fever, lassitude, small appetite, a failure of the general health, a slight wasting of the body—it could be any one of a number of known diseases, any of the impressionable eccentricities precedent on having a child. And still he knew, and she knew—Starr felt it imperative to talk with her alone. It was well within the bounds of reason that his intuition should be entirely wrong, although he did not believe so for a minute. There *had* been Ernest's interest in photography—the inclusion of chemistry among his earlier hobbies.)

"I'm going to suggest that you go to the hospital for observation, Mrs. Tuffman."

"But Doctor—I mean, surely it won't be for many months?"

"No, but I am dissatisfied with your general condition."

Bertha looked at Starr suddenly with a strange hostility.

"I think that I prefer not to. You mustn't think me rude. I think I would prefer to stay at home, Doctor."

He observed her thoughtfully for quite a while.

"Naturally, the decision rests with you."

Her hostility faded slowly. Relief took its place. Then fright. . . .

Starr's chance came later in the afternoon of the same day. The Bucklands were giving a garden party for their dahlias, or rather Nina Buckland was (Jock thought them an overblown bore), and the occasion was one of the town's inescapable yearly events.

The garden was charming and filled with dahlias and people. Starr found Bertha in a distant corner, sitting alone in a yew niche on a marble bench beneath the perpetual smirk of a cast bronze faun.

He said: "I'm glad I found you."

For an instant he thought that she was going to leave him; but her smile came shortly, more *(Please turn to page 91)*

"Maybe there'll still be a place in the world where children can play when we get through."

Photograph by Lazarnick

U.S.—Today

A short chronicle of people very like you and me.

By HENRIETTA RIPPERGER

TODAY, our son's number was one of the first drawn in the draft. He called us up long distance to tell us, in case we didn't know, and my heart doubled up like a fist. This is the beginning of something different, for him; for all of us.

As I came home this afternoon past the Square, they were laying a cornerstone. Under it was a time-capsule, with a copy of a daily newspaper and an address by the mayor inside. I wondered who'd find it, and when. I suddenly wished I had a time-capsule filled by my grandmother; not with speeches and printed matter, but with a record of the way she lived day by day. What did they have for dinner? What kind of problems in her children's lives kept her from sleeping at night? When she got hold of a little money all her own, what did she buy? I shall never know.

We've always meant to leave our children and grandchildren a fortune, but the days of amassing one are perhaps over. So I'm going to leave them a story—the story of the American way in 1940-'41. It is about a happy home in a small city. It is about Ed, who is forty-four and is my husband; about Freddy and Barbara and Dick, our eldest, who is twenty-one. I suppose it is about me too; I am small and dark and just over forty, and my name is Elizabeth. It is about our schools, our church, our club, our business and our home. It is about a way of life that I love with all my heart, and that may never be the same again. Here, dear grandchildren, is my dairy:

October 29, 1940

Today the children got off to school with their books and rubbers and lunches; Ed left for the factory, and the house settled down. I spent the morning putting up new curtains, organdy ones with ruffles, in all the bedrooms, with Nora handing me the rods and picking up screw-caps as I dropped them. Ed and I love our place, and every time we get a little extra money, that's where it goes. Like most of the people around us, we own our own home. It's a yellow house set back a little from the street. The yard seems big to the boys when they have to cut the grass or dig paths through the snow, but it isn't really. I can look across it through the bare trees right into my neighbor's sun-porch.

I got my own lunch, a plate of salad and a glass of milk (the curtains had put Nora behind), and turned on the radio. They were drawing draft numbers in Washington and reading them over the air. I listened awhile. They were all big numbers. I turned it off. You never think that what's happening to other people will happen to you. I went down to the store to do my ordering for tomorrow. The grocer charged me sixty-nine cents for a pint of olive oil. He said we'd be lucky, soon, to get any at all. "No shipments coming over," he said. I finished my marketing, bought a bag of store cookies and took them with me for Freddy and the gang he brings in after school. Freddy is our youngest; he's nine. He is in the fifth grade. He doesn't put it that way, though; he says: "I'll be in the sixth next year." As I came up the porch, I could hear them all inside like a stampede of cattle. They were playing Stukas, sliding down the banister, with the front hall as a landing-field. That was what I opened the door on. I gave them the cookies on condition that they'd go somewhere else. They went, in a body, with Rags, Freddy's dog, barking and pushing around their feet.

I saw Barbara was home from school too, so I got some chocolate squares from the pantry and went into the living-room. She was curled up on the couch, reading the ads in the afternoon paper. "Brownies? Oh, how yummy!" she said. "Look, Mom!" She made room for me beside her. There was a picture of a gold emblem for the sleeve. It cost two dollars. I promised to give it to her for her birthday; she will be sixteen soon. It's hard not to give Babs things; she's so eager, and they make her so happy. Ed says I spoil her, and that the boys spoil her too. Somehow, though, I never worry about Barbara. Underneath she's sound; she has a sturdy heart. She'll come out all right. Suddenly she flipped the edge of a page. "Oh, the draft numbers," she said. We bumped our heads bending over the list.—6840, 120, 8060. . . . "Why, 120 is Dick's number. He'll have to go to camp. Maybe he'll drive a tank. Do you suppose he's seen it? Oh, Mother!" Dick got out of college last June and has just landed a job at last in New York.

"He'll have seen it," I said.

Babs ran to the phone to call up her Father. . . .

I was putting supper on (it was Nora's night out) when Ed came home. He was unusually quiet, and a little late. He just said, "Hello," and sat down, but I was glad that he was in the house. Barbara scrunched in on the edge of his chair to show him the living-room-with-furniture she had drawn for the art class at school. Ed had his arm across her shoulder—Babs can always get his attention—and he was smiling down at her. I glanced at them. It came to me that he looked just that way the first time I saw him.

I was a freshman at Blake. It was *(Please turn to page 87)*

OUR *Prize-Winning*

THE EXPERT SELECTS . . .

PEOPLE young and old fill our pages this month. Our laymen chose one picture that contains shadows, but our expert, Ruzzie Green, refused to be tempted. He feels that the little boy comforting his tiny brother—or sister—is better photographically than the four young airplane builders.

Be sure to have the postmark on your next entries before midnight, April 1st. For contest rules see page 119.

First prize of twenty-five dollars goes to Mr. Grover C. Cleveland, Jr., of Macon, Georgia, for these two youngsters and an explosives box.

Ten dollars and honorable mention to Mr. Nat J. Bonfiglio, of Hillsdale, Michigan, for this sturdy little girl.

Honorable mention and ten dollars to Miss Margaret St. John, of New York City, our only woman winner this month, for this old watchmaker.

SNAPSHOTS *of the* MONTH

THE LAYMEN SELECT . . .

First prize of twenty-five dollars goes to Mr. Fred Chivers, of Montreal, Canada, for this study in absorption.

Ten dollars and honorable mention to Mr. G. M. Relyea, of Salt Lake City, Utah, for this shadow on a wall.

Honorable mention and ten dollars to Mr. Arthur G. Macaulay, of Jersey City, New Jersey, for this merry girl and pavement pattern.

Ten dollars and honorable mention to Mr. R. S. Nash, of Missoula, Montana, for this reflective youngster.

Now I Am a Human Being

"MRS. MCKEITH. ROOMS TO LET." The sign swung and banged in the icy night wind blowing over Riverside Drive through the streets of New York's upper West Side. The McKeiths heard the rattling on their way home. They listened to it, and Mrs. McKeith stopped to pet the firehouse Dalmatian that came out to greet them whenever they passed. For months now, they had had two apartments vacant. Let the sign bang.

As usual, when they came nearer, they looked up the front of the house. Professor Schneele, on the fourth floor, had all his lights going. Of course, it wasn't eight o'clock yet. But then, he always burned them all night long until morning on account of his wife—or maybe because he was afraid in the dark. He looked like that kind of man. The big studio window on the top floor—it should have been cleaned, but that cost a fortune—was lighted too, and brighter than usual. It beamed almost festively into the night.

A young couple lived in the studio, Lenz and Rosl Hein. Mr. McKeith called Rosl, "That young, blonde thing," but Mrs. McKeith always referred to her as: "Mrs. Hein, the wife of that German painter, or whatever he is." Rosl had been standing at the studio window, watching for the McKeiths to come around the corner from Broadway. Every Saturday night they came back at this same time from the movies. When she saw them come, she slipped out into the hall, listened for the sound of the basement door, then hurried down the dusty stairs. A whole week she had been hiding from the McKeiths, but now she could not get down to see them fast enough. Oh, but they'd be surprised!

She could not have chosen a more opportune moment. Her entrance came as if on cue. "The Germans are having a party," Mr. McKeith was saying, "and they haven't paid the rent. Tomorrow they get notice." Mrs. McKeith was about to tell him she was glad they had at least some of the refugee business, and that it was she and she alone who decided who got notice and who not, when Rosl rang the bell. So instead of launching forth on her philippic, Mrs. McKeith went to open up.

What she saw made her step back in amazement. Usually Mrs. Hein wore old, shabby clothes, but now she had on a lace dress, rose-colored, a little faded and old-fashioned perhaps, but it suited her as if she were a princess. Bare throat and shoulders—wide skirt—and a little train gathered up in her left hand. Her cheeks and forehead were covered with a soft flush, and the color contrasted delicately with the glowing brightness of her hair. Mrs. McKeith could not suppress a cry of admiration. Her husband was standing behind her, speechless.

"Here is the rent," Mrs. Hein said quickly, and pressed a few banknotes into Mrs. McKeith's hand. She was all out of breath.

"There was no hurry about it." Mrs. McKeith was almost embarrassed. "You look wonderful—such a gorgeous dress."

"It was my mother's wedding-dress." Rosl stepped back, and a happy, proud smile came fleetingly to her lips. "You see—today is our wedding anniversary. Good night."

"Best of luck to you," Mrs. McKeith called after her, then looked triumphantly at her husband. After a while she said: "They *are* married. I always said so."

Rosl ran back up the stairs, delighted with her little success. And she had told them this was her wedding day. She had had to tell somebody about it!

She had already got beyond the fourth floor, past the Professor's door, which was always half open (because he could not stand the feeling of being shut in), when she heard her name called. It was the thin, gray-haired Professor. His glance wavered, as always; yet Rosl felt immediately that there was something wrong.

"I don't know if we can come," he said in a nervous whisper. "Things are bad with Minnchen. She is excited again. Maybe she listened to news on the radio while I was out with the cakes." The "cakes" were small sweet pastries that Minnchen baked every day, and Schneele peddled from door to door in the neighborhood. That was what they lived on—that, and a few dollars a week from a refugee relief organization.

"Can I do anything?" asked Rosl.

"No. When she has tired herself out, she will lie down. Then maybe I'll come up, after all." He smiled. "You look very pretty, Rosl." Schneele was always gallant; that was left to him. He turned quickly, and vanished into his room.

The Professor and Lenz were good friends in spite of the difference in their ages. It had started when they were in concentration-camp together. Minnchen, they said, was a person confused by the confusion of the times. Men always found a word to classify things—as if they made the unbearable more bearable that way.

Illustrated by
TOM WEBB

A story of refugees who escaped from Hitler's "new order," but could not escape their memories.

By

FRANZ HOELLERING

who wrote "The Defenders"

Back in the studio, Rosl glanced around critically to see if everything was in order. Not that there was much to put in order: Two work-tables, an easel, bookshelves, half empty, and eight chairs that did not match. Across from the broad, drafty windows stood the couch. In the corner—Rosl sometimes burst out laughing when she saw it—stood "the scarecrow." The department store had liked it for a show-window. It was the life-sized, Gothic-surrealist figure of a coquettish girl, pasted together out of rags, colored paper, feathers and string. Aside from her, the room was bare and none too gay. But then, it was only a few friends who were coming. At first they had planned to surprise them with a celebration. Nobody knew it was two years ago that day, that they had married. It had been such a beautiful plan. That morning, however, Hans von Keller had called up, and asked if he might come over in the evening. "I'm going crazy with this being alone," he had said.

He had been with his wife on a ship when it was torpedoed off the Irish coast. Since then he had been alone. So in order not to hurt him, Lenz and Rosl decided to keep their happiness to themselves. It always happened that way in exile. If for once one had a chance to be cheerful, one had to enjoy it in secret.

BUT there was one thing to be thankful for: Lenz had come home with an advance from the department store. Thank God the rent was paid now, or else he might even have talked her into letting the McKeiths wait. He had an aversion to superintendents. In Germany they had all been Gestapo spies. But for days, afraid of Mr. McKeith, she had started at every sound.

Lenz was not so sensitive. He had other things on his mind. He knew how to put petty worries aside and enjoy life, however it was. That was his good luck, and perhaps it constituted the best of his many wonderful qualities.

Rosl heard him in the kitchen putting the wine on ice. He had brought it with him, the waster! Any moment he would come in now. She waited and did not move. This day, if only in her heart, she wanted to make every second as beautiful as it could be.

That it could be two whole years already! Two hard, bitter, glorious years. She remembered how she had cried secretly the day they were married. And all for a veil. In her girlish dreams she had always seen herself as a bride in a white veil with a myrtle wreath. Beside her the bridegroom strode solemnly in a long black coat. The organ played. The bells rang out, and all her relatives and the whole village sat buzzing in the pews. That had been the dream. . . . But instead they had stood tired and hungry, in their everyday clothes, in the drab office of a justice of the peace who looked like a business man, and was one too. So cut and dried! Only the words that they had had to say were beautiful: *"To have and to hold, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death do us part."*

LENZ came in the door and stopped. She spoke the words softly to the end, and did not need to turn her head to know that he was looking at her just as she wanted him to look for always.

"Rosl," he said after a moment. But he came no nearer.

She turned then and looked at him, and did not say it, but thought that Lenz was a hundred times more attractive to her than she could ever be to him. He was getting to look more and more like his father, the slender, strong Rhine raftsman. Yet he was tender, too. That look in his eyes from the concentration-camp was almost gone.

At last he came toward her. She could not wait, but ran up to him and threw her arms about his neck. "Oh, I'm happy, so happy," she whispered. He liked to hear it, for despondency was the one thing he could not stand. "I'm so happy!" And it was true too.

All he said was, "Rosl!" And he pressed her close. . . .

Hans von Keller, pale and slender, and lost, was the first to arrive. "Don't worry," he said. "I'll behave." Anita and Heinrich Huelsenkop followed at his heels. Anita let her expensive fur glide off her boyish shoulders. Her husband, once a member of the German Reichstag, gray at the temples (she was still half a child), wore an old topcoat, far too light for the cold weather. More noticeable even than these differences between them, was a contrast in temperament that expressed itself in their movements. He was slow, measured, pensive; she sharp, edgy and obstinate. Yes, obstinate. She was beautiful too, differently and delicately so. Huelsenkop, fleeing from country to country, had met her somewhere or other, and married her on the spot.

Anita came with a pleasant surprise. She had managed to sell one of Lenz's drawings to a rich American acquaintance. "Here is the check," she said, as if it were nothing. Fifty dollars! Rosl wanted to embrace her, and shrank back at the last moment. Something in Anita kept people at a distance.

"I've invited the Winthorpes up to meet you," Anita said. "They ought to be here in a moment." The words came out as if it had just occurred to her. "Terribly rich. Millions. She collects pictures. If she likes your drawings, Lenz, she'll buy the whole lot. Be nice to them."

"No millions, and at most, one drawing," said Huelsenkop dryly, and went over to Hans von Keller, whom he had not seen since they had been in London.

"I'll have to warn him not to ask Hans about his wife," thought Rosl, but never got around to it. There were steps on the stairs.

"The Winthorpes," said Anita, and opened the door.

She took care of the introductions. Mr. Winthorpe had a barber-shop tan; Mrs. Winthorpe was an exceedingly elegant enigma. Those at least were the first impressions Lenz had of them.

He took them across the room and introduced them to Hans von Keller, who bowed silently. Mr. Winthorpe, as soon as he had said his hasty greetings, stormed over to Huelsenkop, blurting out half a dozen questions about politics and the war, and evidently anxious to resume an earlier conversation.

Mrs. Winthorpe seemed lost for a moment, then turned abruptly to Lenz. "Anita has told me about your drawings," she said. "I'd like very much to see them. As a matter of fact, that's why I've come."

"Please," said Lenz. That was all. He was embarrassed, but he led her to his work-table and opened a portfolio. Before Mrs. Winthorpe could look at the drawings, however, she caught a glimpse of the scarecrow. It startled her. She smiled quickly to hide her confusion. "What's that?" she asked.

"Just—a plaything," Lenz said. "Something for a show window."

"Oh," said Mrs. Winthorpe. She bent over the drawings. They were of New York street children. Little Broadway scenes and Central Park vignettes. Rosl winked "Good luck!" over to Lenz, and disappeared into the kitchen.

Even the Nazi commissars felt ashamed, confronted with

"Didn't you use to paint landscapes?" asked Mrs. Winthorpe, suddenly critical. Obviously Anita had told her.

"Yes, but German landscapes," he answered. "I can't manage American ones."

"Very interesting," said Mr. Winthorpe from across the room, out of his own conversation. His ears seemed to be everywhere at once.

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Winthorpe.

"It always turns into a German landscape," Lenz answered thoughtfully. "It's as if I weren't here yet. As if—" He kept searching for the right expression, sorry he had gone so far. He was no theoretician.

"Is it because you are homesick?" asked Mrs. Winthorpe seriously.

Hans von Keller had come up behind him. Softly he said: "I never want to see Germany again as long as I live."

Lenz glanced imploringly at him, then answered Mrs. Winthorpe: "Yes, that may be it."

"You, homesick?" laughed Anita, coming over. "Perhaps for the concentration-camp!"

her frailty. That was what had saved Schneele's life.

"Woods and mountains are still woods and mountains," Lenz answered, and there was a hidden sharpness in his tone. But he did not want to let himself be irritated. Anita was far too nice to him. Only, she shouldn't talk about serious things.

"Woods—mountains," Anita repeated, and her child's face looked suddenly almost evil. "All I need now is to find you're nothing but a sentimental emigré." Her voice was louder than necessary. A slight echo reverberated from the studio ceiling. What had come over her?

Lenz glanced involuntarily at Huelsenkop. He seemed not to have heard. But Mr. Winthorpe had his eyes on Anita. Mrs. Winthorpe laughed, a short, penetrating bell-like laughter that did not know, itself, why it was twirled so high, then broken off so abruptly.

Rosl in the kitchen heard the laughter and almost joined in. She felt in such a glorious good humor. If only Hans von Keller didn't spoil things! She was wondering if she ought to call him out to her. Just then there was a knock at the hall door. "That's Schneele," she thought, and threw open the door with a friendly welcome.

It was the Professor. But he shook his head sadly when she invited him in. "No," he said. "The attack is not yet over. I must stay with her. Now she wants to talk to Hitler. She wants to convince him that I must not be annihilated. She thinks his whole politics is nothing but a misunderstanding. She thinks she can explain it to him." He chuckled as if it were a good joke, and handed Rosl a small box he had been holding in his hand. "Here are a few cakes I could not sell. Tomorrow they'd be stale. It was a bad day."

"Many thanks." Rosl's voice was trembling. "Maybe I ought to go down to see Minnchen. Maybe I can help her."

"No. That is the odd thing: She wants only me with her night and day. She'll go to sleep soon. Tomorrow everything will be all right again. I hope you enjoy the cakes. She makes them really good, my Minnchen."

He turned and slipped down the stairs again. Such a thin little man. A few years ago he had still been the finest surgeon in Cologne. Professor Siegfried Schneele, head of the surgical clinic. Then, in the concentration-camp, they broke his hands. His left was quite stiff now. On the right, he could, with difficulty, move three fingers. Often he talked too much, but never a word of having been a great doctor. Now, and then he would look at his crippled hands, shake his head, and then hide them quickly in his coat pockets. And Minnchen! Very few people in Cologne had known that Schneele had a wife at home who was "not quite well." It was only after his arrest that she appeared, a little filigree figure with enormous child's eyes in her ashen face. Even the Nazi commissars felt ashamed, confronted with her frailty. That was what had saved Schneele's life.

Rosl closed the door and went back into the kitchen. She set the wine and the glasses on the tray—and the cakes. She wanted to cry, but instead, put on her most radiant face. A general "Ah," greeted her entrance into the studio.

"A party," said Hans von Keller tonelessly. He helped her set the tray on the table.

MR. WINTHORPE proposed a toast. It was one of those little American speeches so pleasant for the newcomer to hear. The speaker mentions his own ancestors, and pictures the whole American people as a nation of refugees from European tyranny. He closed with, "We are very happy to have you here," and raised his glass.

"I can't stand any more speeches," whispered Anita, standing next to Lenz. But she instantly smiled with delight when Mr. Winthorpe drank to her.

"You were in a concentration-camp?" Mrs. Winthorpe turned to Lenz.

"Twenty-three months."

"Let's turn on the radio," cried Anita. Rosl thought it was to save Lenz from the questioning. He did not like to talk about himself.

"And what for?" Mrs. Winthorpe went on.

"But I told you all about it. He was not a Nazi," said Anita, mixing into the conversation again. "Lenz, let's have some music."

"I want to look at the drawings again," said Mrs. Winthorpe softly, and went back to the work-table.

"Thank you," Lenz whispered to Anita.

"No thanks necessary. I've heard enough sob stories. I want to dance."

Lenz thought perhaps she was right. Huelsenkop looked at his watch and called: "There's a news broadcast in a minute." It was the first time he had raised his voice all evening.

"News," cried Anita angrily. "He listens to news all day long. He reads the papers all day long. Radio and newspapers! Radio and newspapers! I can't stand it any longer. Hitler and war! War and Hitler! I want to dance, John!"

Mr. Winthorpe started. In the deathly silence that followed her outburst, Hans von Keller whistled softly. They all looked at him, all but Mrs. Winthorpe who, bent over the work-table, seemed absorbed in Lenz's drawings. But Rosl had seen her lift her head for a moment when Anita called "John!"

Hans von Keller shook his finger at Anita as if she were a badly brought up child. Then he turned back to the scarecrow, beside which he was standing. "What a coquette she is!" he whispered. "What a coquette!" He looked drunk. And from two glasses of wine.

Rosl went to him. "When did you eat last?" she asked.

"Yesterday—day before yesterday—maybe tomorrow," answered Hans von Keller. He sounded as if he were reciting a poem. Then he pulled himself together. "I will behave myself. I promise. My word of honor."

Rosl took him by the arm and led him out into the kitchen. There would be enough to give him a little supper, anyway.

Anita stared after them as if she had *(Please turn to page 104)*

THE New CULBERTSON SYSTEM FOR 1941

BY ELY CULBERTSON

A Contract-Bridge bidding system is constructed like a big-city skyscraper. It must be strongest in the substructure, the concrete-and-steel foundations upon which everything else must rest. These foundations, in a bidding system, consist of such basic parts as the honor-trick count, minimum requirements for biddable suits, and standards established for opening one-bids.

Toward the top of the structure, additions or changes mean little. Add a slam convention, drop a slam convention, change a slam convention, and the net difference is hardly felt. The bulk of the bidding situations are based on the fundamentals which are securely anchored at the bottom of the building. When these fundamentals are changed, be it ever so slightly, the influence is felt throughout the entire structure.

If a minimum biddable suit is to be fairly strong, such as A-Q-x-x, then adequate trump support for that suit may be fairly weak—something like K-x-x. Weaken the standards for the biddable suit, and automatically you must strengthen the standards for support. It is so throughout the bidding.

As the years go on, we learn, we progress and we improve. Thousands of new and different bids are suggested or attempted by bridge-players all over the world. When these new bids concern only slam conventions or other parts of the upper reaches of bidding, which are the window-dressing of a player's game, they may immediately be added to our bidding system and no one will be much affected. But when new bids involve changes in the fundamentals, which are the bridge-player's bread and butter, even though they are distinct improvements, it would cause trouble to adopt them too soon. Conforming changes would have to be made throughout the entire system.

My policy is to move cautiously, to deliberate over these various bidding gadgets, to sift them, to weed out the worthless and unnecessary ones, and finally to use only those that time has proved to be best.

That is why, after first introducing the Culbertson System of Contract Bridge in 1929, I made no change in the fundamentals for six long years. Then, in 1935, I was able to give bridge-players the "Streamlined Culbertson System," in which the emphasis was on safety. Again there was no change for six long years; and now again, in 1941, I am able to present the final result of our six years of study. This time it is the "Improved Culbertson System," simpler and easier to learn and to use than ever before, yet true to the methods that the *best* of the *best players* usually follow.

New Honor-trick Count

In outlining the changes which have been proved necessary, I will start, as everything in contract bridge must start, with the Table of Honor-tricks. All bidding must be based on accurate hand-valuation. You cannot bid intelligently unless you have some idea of how many tricks your hand will win.

Here is an amazing thing: The 1941 honor-trick count represents a radical change, a drastic change from what has gone before; yet nowhere is the valuation of any combination of cards altered to the extent of a single honor-trick; no, not even so much as one-half honor-trick! Everything new in the honor-trick table falls within the limits of that indefinite, somewhat vague quantity we call a "plus value." Yet the change of a plus value in the honor-trick table may at times be enough to affect the auction in every stage from the opening bid to the final pass.

The plus value is a very *fluid* value. No one ever pretended that it is accurate in the way that the valuation of an ace as one honor-trick is accurate. Actually a plus value is something which, added to the honor-tricks you hold, sways the balance when there is a question of what to do on close hands.

Any bridge-player knows that the addition of an odd queen or a few jacks and tens to a hand may cause it to win an extra trick or two, and then again may not. If mathematicians worked through billions of bridge possibilities, they might find, for example, that an isolated queen will produce one trick every 2 14/19 hands, whereas a J-10-x will win one trick every 3 3/7 hands. Such information would be valueless.

In the first place, no one alive has the *patience* to value every bridge hand that closely. In the second place, no one alive could *profit* from valuing a bridge hand that closely. The differences in skill of the individual players in the game, plus their state of mind, physical condition, and ability to get along with one another, must always have much greater effect on the result of the game than any minor fractions of trick values could have. It is best to let the occasional extra tricks take care of themselves.

Here are the changes which appear in the Standard Honor-trick Table for 1941 (and for at least several years thereafter). They are the first changes which have been made in the Culbertson Honor-trick Table since early in 1935.

First: K-Q-J in the same suit is now to be valued as 1-plus honor-trick. It used to be 1½.

Because of the 6-card suit, and the singleton in the hand, "one spade" should be bid on the above hand. Under the old rules this hand was passed.

DEMOTED
NOW 1+ HONOR-TRICK
This combination formerly counted 1½ in the honor-trick table.
NO LONGER 1 HONOR-TRICK
The King is still ½ an honor-trick. The Queen is a "plus value."

Second: K-x and Q-x in different suits may no longer be combined to count one full honor-trick. Both of these cards, of course, stay in the honor-trick table. The K-x, as always, is ½ honor-trick. The Q-x, as always, is a plus value.

Third: Any singleton or void in the hand should be counted as a plus value and included when you add up your total number of honor-tricks. This is the most radical development of all.

I shall now explain these changes and the reasons for them more fully:

Let us first consider the K-Q-J combination. How many tricks will it probably win defensively? You lead the king, and your opponents win with the ace. Now the queen and jack are the highest cards left in the suit. Sometimes, it is true, they will win two tricks. More often, after the queen has won a trick, somebody will be out of the suit and will be able to trump your jack. In such cases the combination wins only one trick.

If K-Q-J would win two tricks exactly half the time, and one trick exactly half the time, its value would be just 1½ honor-tricks. But experience has proved that K-Q-J is worth very slightly less

NOW BIDDABLE
Even in the major suits, it is now permissible to bid suits as weak as these in some cases. The minimums were formerly Q-J-x-x and J-x-x-x-x.

than 1½, and very slightly more than 1, and the plus value is ideal for translating this minor distinction into terms of the honor-trick table. We are then saved from that occasional overvaluation which so often leads to unsound opening bids and responses.

The reduction in the valuation of K-x and Q-x is due partly to the same reasons, but in this case there are other reasons too. True, very often K-x and Q-x in different suits are worth one honor-trick. But about as often they are worth somewhat less.

If ♠ K-x-x-x, ♥ Q-x-x, ♦ K-x-x, ♣ Q-x-x equals two honor-tricks, as it used to, and if ♠ K-x-x-x, ♥ K-x-x, ♦ K-x-x, ♣ K-x-x equals two honor-tricks, it is quite obvious that our valuation is faulty. A king is a higher card than a queen, and is therefore worth more than a queen. The two extra kings in the second hand must be worth more than the two queens in the first hand. Why, therefore, should they count the same? Both simplicity and accuracy are better served by finding an *average* value which is easily remembered and used; for note this: *The simpler the system, the better people will play.* When people are burdened with too much arithmetic and bookkeeping, they have no time left to give to the much more important parts of the game.

Why Count Singletons?

As for the big change, the addition of singletons and voids to the honor-trick table, two questions will immediately spring to the minds of many bridge-players:

First question: A singleton, and especially a void suit, is not an "honor." It cannot win a trick, as an honor can. Why, then, should it be included in a table of honor-tricks?

Second question: A void suit is worth more than a singleton, so why are both valued the same? If the singleton is a plus value, why should not the void suit be ½ honor-trick?

It is true that a singleton or a void suit does not itself win a trick. For example, when you have a void suit and ruff a lead of that suit, the trick is won not by the void, but by the trump card with which you ruff. For years we have stressed the point that a singleton is not a trick-winning value. Yet the beginner has always considered a singleton to be of some value, and this is one case in which the beginner's instinct is wiser than the expert's dogma. A singleton may not be a trick-winning value, but a singleton is a *symptom* of trick-winning values *which must always be present in the same hand.* Consider, for example, this hand:

GOOD FOR A BID
Because of the many "honor-cards" in the hand, which add playing strength, bid "one heart," although there are fewer than 3 honor-tricks.

♠ K-Q-x-x-x, ♥ A-x-x, ♦ x-x-x, ♣ x-x

The above hand contains no singleton and counts two honor-tricks. The five-card spade suit may be expected to win tricks not only with the ♠ K-Q but also, if it becomes the trump suit, with at least one of its "long cards."

Let us now change the hand so that it will contain a singleton. To do so, we remove one of the small clubs. That leaves only twelve cards, and we must add a card to the hand somewhere. Where shall we add it?

If we add it in spades, we get this:

♠ K-Q-x-x-x-x, ♥ A-x-x, ♦ x-x-x, ♣ x

Now we have another probable long-suit winner in our spade suit. This unquestionably increases the value of the hand.

Suppose we add that extra card not to spades, but to hearts or diamonds. Then we might get this:

♠ K-Q-x-x-x, ♥ A-x-x-x, ♦ x-x-x, ♣ x

In this case we have created an extra length value (in hearts) which may eventually develop a long-card trick, or which will provide stronger support than we could have offered before for a suit partner may have. Again the singleton has not in itself created a trick-winning possibility, but the *presence* of the singleton has simultaneously caused the presence of an extra value in the hand. In fact, any *normal* hand (not necessarily a freak) which contains a singleton or void must produce some extra trick-winning possibility somewhere. By far the simplest and easiest means of *counting* that extra value, whatever its nature, is simply to count the singleton.

Now, how about the fact that a void or singleton, though it is not necessarily an honor, is included in the honor-trick table? This is quibbling about terminology, not about bidding methods. The table of honor-tricks is so called because "honor-trick" is an easy term to use and has always been adequately correct for the purpose. Actually the honor-trick *(Please turn to page 107)*

NEW VALUE
This hand used to be worth 2½ honor-tricks. Now it is worth 2½+. The singleton club—any singleton in the hand—is now a "plus value."

A MAN'S DAILY

The story of an artist who sacrificed his career for the sake of love.

The Story Thus Far:

ALL morning young William Braton had been painting—the lovely June landscape of Pennsylvania was full of pictures. Walking back toward a farmhouse, he ventured to ask the farmer's wife to give him luncheon. But it was Ruth, the daughter, who held his eyes. And afterward he begged them to let her pose for him—in the kitchen, slicing bread.

Day after day he came. *"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread,"* he called the picture when it was done.

He sent it to an exhibition, and it won immediate praise from the critics. More important, he went back again and again to see Ruth, for he had found his attempts to paint in the city studio his wealthy father had provided were futile now. "I haven't worked well in New York," he said.

"That's odd," his father said, and lifted his gray eyebrows. "I should have thought the intellectual stimulus—"

"I can't paint out of intellectual stimulus," William said bluntly. "I paint out of earth and bread and water—and light. I am in love," he said. "I am going to be married to Ruth Harnsberger."

"Nonsense!" his mother said sharply. "Harold, why don't you speak? Why, it's absurd!"

"I don't know what to say," his father stammered. "Your mother is right, of course, William. I don't know that it's absurd, so much as dangerous. Yes, that's it."

"It's absurd," his mother interrupted. "A girl I would not have in my kitchen—ignorant—"

"Be quiet," William said sharply. "It is for me to say what she is. She is the sort of woman who is a man's daily bread. I want no more."

He left the house that night. Shortly thereafter, he was married to Ruth. . . .

The years passed. Their children—Hal and Mary and Jill—were born. Ruth's father was killed by a passing truck, and her mother died. William kept on with his painting—with steadily decreasing success.

"Ah, William, you should come out of your too-green retirement," his mother said to him one evening when he visited his parents in Philadelphia. "My son is bucolic," she explained to a guest who was present. "He married a farmer's daughter, and paints whatever he sees out of her windows."

"Mother!" he begged her.

"Well, so you do, William," she retorted, "and you've grown intensely boring to everybody."

Feeling that he was going to seed, William returned home to Ruth, determined to leave her for a time in the hope of recapturing the first careless rapture of his earlier work. But he found that young Hal, in revolt because of a whipping his mother had administered, had disappeared. His farewell message they found finally, in the old family Bible. There in Hal's childish handwriting under the date of his birth were these words:

"Left Home August 13, 1910."

"I took up the book to find some help in it," Ruth sobbed, "and it turned to this!"

The heavy book slid to the floor and she wept aloud. And he knelt beside her and held her while she wept. He could never leave her now. *(The story continues in detail:)*

HE was not sure whether he could get to the top of the hill or not, but he wanted to try. He had waked this spring morning with an intense longing to see above the level of the green trees that shut the farmhouse in so heavily. In the forty years that he and Ruth had lived here together, the trees, already large when he first saw them, had grown enormous. They spread over the sky, and under their shadows he was often restless.

"Let's cut them down," he said to Ruth again and again.

"What—the trees my granddad's father put in?" she cried, horrified. "Why, Pop would rise from his grave!"

"Then leave them, by all means," he had retorted with a grim humor that he knew would be quite safe because it would escape them all. There was only one person in this family of his whose perception of humor could not be safely trusted as obtuse, and that was Jill's second boy, Richard. He saw in that child's dark eyes, only recently at a height to be well above the Sunday dinner table, something which was at all times so understanding, so quickly mirthful, even over the small dry jokes of an old man, that he wondered sometimes if some germ of his own soul, swept along in the strong stream of Ruth's blood, had lodged in the boy. But he did not know. Richard was, when he spoke to him, aloof, a little mature.

"How do you do, Grandfather?" he said invariably.

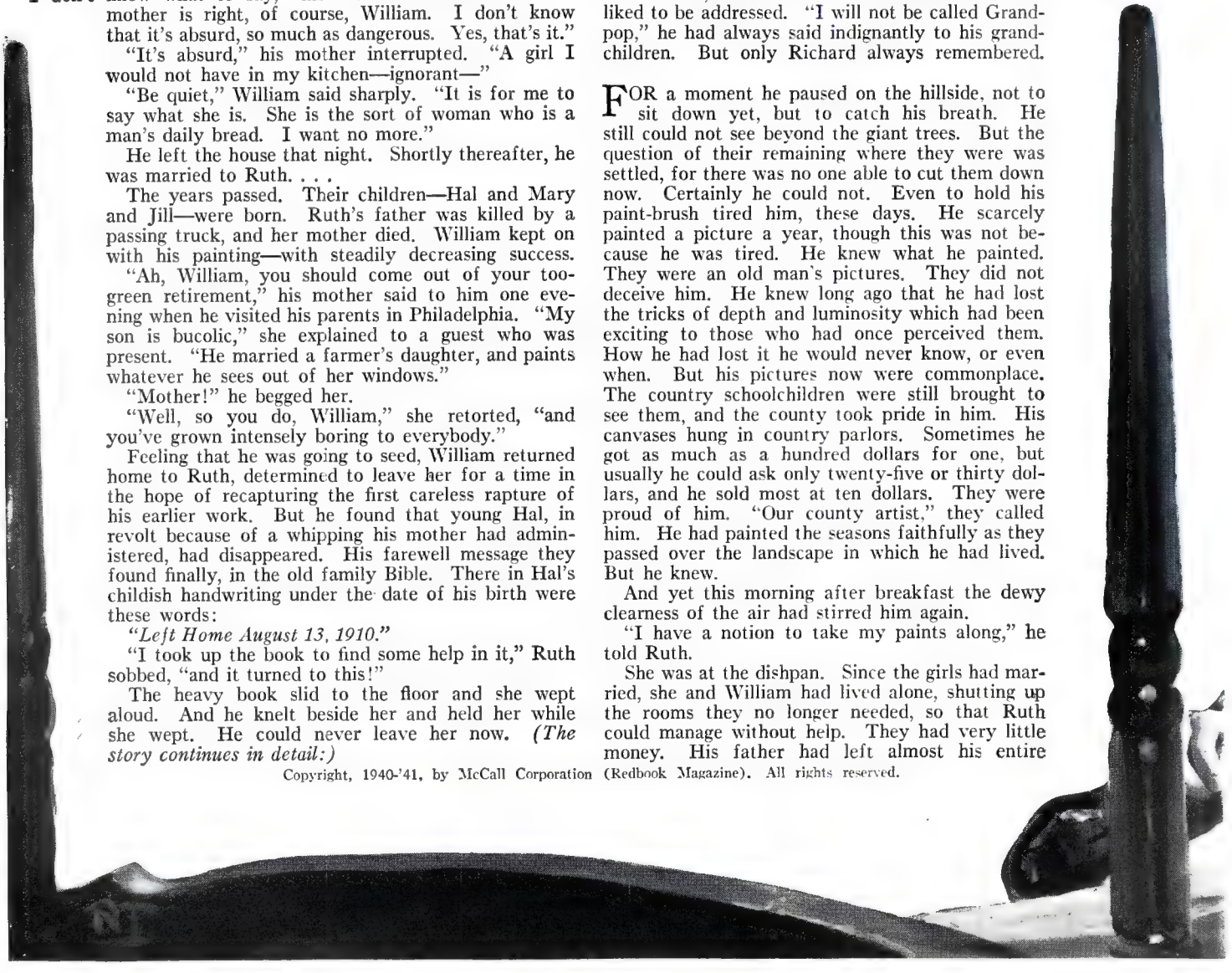
"How do you do, Richard?" William as invariably replied. They shook hands, and that was all. But he was pleased that out of the nine children which Mary and Jill had between them, Richard at least remembered how he liked to be addressed. "I will not be called Grandpop," he had always said indignantly to his grandchildren. But only Richard always remembered.

FOR a moment he paused on the hillside, not to sit down yet, but to catch his breath. He still could not see beyond the giant trees. But the question of their remaining where they were was settled, for there was no one able to cut them down now. Certainly he could not. Even to hold his paint-brush tired him, these days. He scarcely painted a picture a year, though this was not because he was tired. He knew what he painted. They were an old man's pictures. They did not deceive him. He knew long ago that he had lost the tricks of depth and luminosity which had been exciting to those who had once perceived them. How he had lost it he would never know, or even when. But his pictures now were commonplace. The country schoolchildren were still brought to see them, and the county took pride in him. His canvases hung in country parlors. Sometimes he got as much as a hundred dollars for one, but usually he could ask only twenty-five or thirty dollars, and he sold most at ten dollars. They were proud of him. "Our county artist," they called him. He had painted the seasons faithfully as they passed over the landscape in which he had lived. But he knew.

And yet this morning after breakfast the dewy clearness of the air had stirred him again.

"I have a notion to take my paints along," he told Ruth.

She was at the dishpan. Since the girls had married, she and William had lived alone, shutting up the rooms they no longer needed, so that Ruth could manage without help. They had very little money. His father had left almost his entire



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BREAD

By PEARL S. BUCK

Illustrated by RICO TOMASO

fortune to the founding and maintenance of a museum of art, the center of which was his father's own collection. To William, after his mother's death, he had left only enough barely to feed and clothe one person—nothing for a family. Ruth had wanted him to fight the will, but he would not, though he could not tell her why.

"I did enough to disappoint my father," he had thought with sad, secret tenderness. "I won't rob him of his pictures too."

"You'd better not lug that stuff up to the top of the hill," Ruth said; "you know your heart won't stand it."

She began to wipe the dishes she had washed. William wouldn't offer to wipe, of course. He never did unless she told him to.

"I don't see what you want to climb that hill for, anyway," she said sharply. "You aint fit for it."

"I'll never be more fit for it," he replied gently.

"Well, don't say I didn't tell you," she called, as he went away.

To herself she said, what was the use of painting more pictures, when there were nearly a hundred stacked in the barn not sold.

So he started up the hill without his paints. Now, not halfway up, he knew she was right. He turned and plodded upward again for five minutes. It was all he could do to get himself up. He sat down at last to rest, gasping for breath. His heart was beating so hard it shook his body. If it had strength enough to beat like that, why could it not serve him better? This hill he had once scarcely thought of as a hill. He had gone leaping up, laden with easel and canvas and paints, eager for the day's work. But now he had gone back to the perspectives of childhood. The hill towered above him. He waited a little longer.

He was, as he now sat, barely above the treetops. But it had been so long since he had even this height from which to gaze, that he felt very high. He could see the long soft roll of the green countryside. The farms divided it solidly into centers of human living. He could see in the west the farm where Mary lived, and nearer, almost at the foot of the hill, Jill's house. Both the girls had married young farmers whom they had known always as neighbors. All the farms looked alike, big barns and compact stone houses, like Ruth's and his. Seen from another hill, this place at his feet where he had spent his life with Ruth would look like the others. There was no difference to tell that his life was different from any other. Nor was it, except as he was always, unalterably, different in himself.

THAT difference he knew was felt, gently, respectfully, when he appeared in the little town which was also the county seat. When he went to the fair, when he sauntered in at the firemen's carnival, or at a meeting of the school board, they gave him greetings which were not quite the same as those they gave each other. Sometimes he liked this difference; sometimes it made him feel lonely.

Today, on this hillside, he felt lonely. He had missed the world. Had it, he wondered, missed him? A few in it, perhaps, had missed him. There were a scant dozen of his canvases, somewhere, grown valuable perhaps. At least his first picture of Ruth was still in the Metropolitan. He sighed, and rose to climb higher. Somewhere near the top he heard behind him a rustle in the

Was it for this man that he had denied himself, to stay with Ruth? Was it for this that he had endured the long nights of her desolation?

grass and he stopped, glad of the excuse. A pheasant, he thought, and then he heard it again. It was too heavy for a pheasant. It might be a fawn. He looked in the direction of the wind that carried the sound upward, and saw beneath him not a fawn but the black head of a boy, and then the face and shoulders of Jill's son Richard.

"Well!" he said, panting. "So you're here too, today."

"Yes, Grandfather," Richard said. He came leaping up through the grass.

William gasped a moment. Then he was struck with a suspicion. "Did anybody—send you after me?" he asked.

"Nobody did," Richard answered. He slipped his hand into his grandfather's. "I was playing in the orchard, and I saw you and came by myself."

"If anybody had sent you, I'd have told you to go home again," William said. But he was glad the boy was here, because to his alarm, he could not see clearly. The boy's face was blurred.

"What are you going to do, Grandfather?" Richard asked.

"Climb—to the top of the hill," William replied. He would, too, though he knew now he ought not to go on. Lightnings of pain were darting about his heart.

"I have a nest up there," Richard said eagerly. "Will I show it to you?"

"'*Shall* I—*shall* I,'" William grumbled. "Learn to speak your words properly, child."

"Shall I," Richard repeated. "Shall I, Grandfather?"

"You come up here often, do you?" William asked.

"Every day, just about, but I didn't know you did," the boy replied.

"I used to—every day, too," William said. He felt very badly indeed, but if he did not go on now, he never would reach the top again. He gathered all his strength together. "Come on," he said, "let's finish the last bit. I'll lean on your shoulder, and you can help me up."

"All right, Grandfather," Richard said.

They went up, step by step. The child was proud of his responsibility, and tried to temper his energy to the slow old steps. Under his hand William felt the slender body, restrained, but springing ahead in spite of the child's will to subdue it.

"Steady, Rick," he muttered. "Steady's the only way I'll get to the end, now."

RUTH paused in her dusting to go to the door. The postman was there.

"I have a special-delivery letter for you. It's from Hal," he said. "Must be somepin special, 'cause he don't usually send special, does he?"

"No, he don't," she agreed.

She sat down at the desk, put on her spectacles and wrote her name carefully and gave back the receipt.

"Hope there's nothing wrong," the postman said.

"There wasn't, last we heard," she replied calmly.

"Queer he don't want to come back to the farm," the postman went on.

"He's a wanderer," Ruth said. She would not open the letter as long as he waited.

"Ran away when he was fourteen, didn't he?" the postman said, laughing.

"Yes, he did," Ruth said. Against her wish not to talk, she could not keep from saying proudly: "And managed somehow to keep alive and going for two years, and came home looking as fat and healthy as you please, and he'd been clear out to the West Coast and back."

"Hal's smart that way," the postman agreed. "Well, it's sort of too bad he can't help you folks out a little now with the farm. Mr. Braton don't feel so good these days, does he?"

"He's real frail," Ruth said sadly. "It's his heart. He eats and sleeps good, too."

"People with that trouble don't have energy," the postman said. "Does Hal know?" he asked solemnly. "You'd ought to tell him, Mrs. Braton. Maybe he'd come home."

"Mr. Braton never wants I should tell the children about him," she said. "He doesn't want them to think he's got any claim on 'em."

"Yeah?" the postman said. "Well, so long, Mrs. Braton; I guess I got to be goin' on."

She sat down the moment he was gone, to read Hal's letter. It was from Paris, France. He had a job there, driving a car for some Americans. He had never come home after the war. He had been a private in the Army of Occupation in Germany, and afterward he had liked it over there, or perhaps not liked it so much as just liked traveling around. So he had found one job after another to keep him going. He had never married. She thought sometimes with bitterness that it was William's blood in him that kept him restless and never willing to settle down. Even now when William was old and half sick, he was restless. Though goodness knows, she had done everything to make his life easy!

"William's had an awful easy life," she muttered to herself sometimes when she saw him wandering around the yard while she worked in the house.

She tore open Hal's letter. He wrote with a pencil, as he had when they got his first letter from a ranch in Arizona. For a year and two months after Hal had run away from home they had heard nothing, and she had cried at night until she was worn out. During the day, so long as she could work, she could keep from crying. But at night she was sure he was dead. William had been good to her. He had done his best to comfort her. Then Hal's letter had come, and she knew he was alive after all. She would keep that letter as long as she lived.

She unfolded this one and began to read it carefully.

Dear Mom:

Well, I sure am having one swell time. We drove all over England then drove through Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy. This is Spain. It didn't make me feel too good to see the old battlefields and the cemeteries full of white crosses when we went to find the boss' son that fell in action. I sure was lucky to get out of it. Well, Mom, this is to say we are coming home right away. The second girl's got engaged, and the madame wants to get home right away to begin the fixings and so on. So you'll see me most any day after you get this. So long, Mom, and take care of yourself, and this goes for Dad.

Your loving son Hal.

"Now that's real good news, and I'll tell William," she murmured half aloud. She went to the door and looked out. William was still toiling up the hill in the sunshine.

"William!" she cried. But her voice could not reach him. "He's so foolish," she thought with anxious anger. "He'll come back dead beat, and for something he didn't need to do." She sighed and went back to her work. She had better get her work out of the way. He'd have to be taken care of as soon as he got home, like as not. . . .

"Don't be so cross with me, Ruth," he begged her faintly. He was in such physical distress that the added weight of her harsh angry frightened love was almost enough to send him over the edge that was always near him now, beyond which was darkness.

"I'm not cross," she retorted. "I'm just sayin', William, that if you'd only listen to me—"

"I do listen to you," he whispered. "I have always listened to you."

"Well, I certainly told you not to try to climb that hill," she retorted.

He did not answer. He closed his eyes and braced himself for the new attack upon him of strong fresh pain. He must remember what the doctor told him, that he would probably not die in pain. Death would come stealing upon him in the night when he was asleep. He would simply not wake. That was his comfort.

Ah, here was the agony! He groaned out of the depths of his being, a groan that was a retch from his soul.

"Here, hold to me," Ruth commanded him. She took his hands in the way that long experience together had taught them helped him most, and he clutched her hands. Sweat broke from his palms, but her hands did not slip. The crest of pain passed.

"You're strong—as ever—" he gasped.

"I have to be," she retorted.

BUT she was kind in her own way. She knew the habit of his pain. At just the right moment she gave him the tablets; at just the right moment she moved his legs and arms so that he could feel his body alive, and rubbed his flesh, and then gave him a little hot milk, and then covered him against the inevitable chill that came over him when the pain was gone.

"Now you go to sleep," she said more gently than she had yet spoken. This attack had been worse than usual, she thought. "Maybe some day you'll believe your old wife," she said with scolding tenderness. She bent and kissed his ash-white cheek, and felt the tears come suddenly to her eyes. She loved him so, though he made her so angry, and though she thought sometimes she had never been really happy with him, after all.

He seemed so gentle, but at bottom he was stubborn. It didn't matter what most men did around a place, he would never do anything. He wouldn't even drive a nail or mend a shutter that the wind blew loose. She had had to do everything. Once she had wanted him to learn to milk the cows, *(Please turn to page 99)*

"This one he painted one day when they was making hay. A thunderstorm come up—see, there it is."

Pink-Ribbon Juror

WHEN Connie Ridgefield woke that morning, as the cruise-ship was coming back into the Hudson, she had never heard of the case of the People of New York *vs.* Sylvanus Magargle, for conspiracy to obstruct justice; and she wouldn't have cared about it if she had. What was worrying her was the case of Hugh Bardman *vs.* Connie Ridgefield. He was demanding a life sentence for both of them, and he had prosecuted his suit so vigorously in these nine days on shipboard that last night the defense had almost been ready to enter a plea of *nolo contendere*—or in non-legal language, "I give up."

But she hadn't quite given up—not even on the last night of the cruise, with the moon bright on the boat-deck, and the breeze blowing in warm from the Gulf Stream, and his arms around her. For she knew exactly what she wanted to do with her life, and he wouldn't fit into her plans at all. . . . She looked at her watch and jumped out of bed: twenty after seven, and she had a date for breakfast with him at half-past. Beyond her porthole New York simmered in the August morning, looking just about as she had last seen it nine days ago—before she had ever heard of Hugh Bardman.

A cruise to the Gulf of St. Lawrence had seemed just what she needed, to rest up after hard work at the Columbia summer school for her Master of Arts degree; it had taken almost the last of her money, but she could afford that when she was practically certain of a job at St. Thorkilda's School. How could she foresee that she would meet a man who would ask her to throw away her plans and spend the rest of her life chasing around the world with him—or that when he kissed her, she'd be tempted to do it?

But emotions that blazed up on shipboard were apt to flicker out ashore. Now that she was coming back home—"I must keep away from him, give myself time to think this over," she told herself as she bathed and dressed in frantic haste, so as not to be late for breakfast with him.

Coming into the dining-saloon, she noticed that they had taken down the seating list—that diagram that had shown her, on the first evening, a side table for two labeled "Mr. Hugh Bardman—Mr. Conway Ridgefield." It wasn't the first time that name of hers had caused confusion; but when Conway Ridgefield had mailed a check for a cabin alone, she had been in too much of a rush to reflect that she might be listed as *Mister;* and you couldn't blame a harassed chief steward for seating two bachelors together. Arriving late for the first dinner, she decided to get her seat changed next day; she could stand Mr. Hugh Bardman for one evening. And ever since—

He rose now, as she came up to the table, with a look in his eyes that set her heart to pounding, and spread a flush over her blonde coolness.

"You look lovelier than ever this morning, darling," he told her.

"Hugh! You mustn't call me that! Not before breakfast, anyway."

"I hope to be calling you that before breakfast for the rest of my life," he said with a cool assurance that annoyed her.

"Oh, you do? Well, let's not talk about that—or anything else—till we've had our coffee."

They breakfasted in silence, but a warm comfortable silence. If she said the word, they'd breakfast together tomorrow too, and every morning thereafter—and she'd be tied for life to a geologist for an oil company whose work carried him all over the world; away from her work, her friends, her interests. . . . So, after a whiff or two of her cigarette—

"And now," she said with a desperate attempt at firmness, "we're coming back to land—and down to earth. What I mean, Hugh—how do we know this isn't just the sort of thing that happens to people on cruises? Most of this crowd is terrible; so when you and I happened to be thrown together at the very outset, and happened to—to click—well, after that, we might as well have been alone together on a desert island."

"So what? I've always thought that would be a pretty good test, if you could stand each other on a desert island. And we did click, at sight."

"That needn't mean much. I've clicked at sight with other people, and never got any farther." (Though if she'd seen Stacy Marill again, perhaps—)

"Have you?" he said, unconcerned. "But we got quite a bit farther."

"Yes—" She reddened. "But there's such a momentum about being together all the time, if you attract each other at all; it practically pushes you into each other's arms. I hate to be pushed! And when you ask me to give up everything else for the sake of what's happened on shipboard— I like my work, and I may make something of a reputation at it some day—teaching old French literature, and writing about it. But I'd have to live near big libraries—in big cities, or university towns. You want me to go and live with you in the Texas Panhandle, with a prospect of moving on to Venezuela next year, and God knows where after that. You wouldn't give up your work; but just because I'm a woman—Hugh, that isn't fair!"

"No, it isn't," he agreed. "But it's the way the world is made, at present; and I didn't make it. I'm asking you to give up something that means a good deal, for something that—I hope—will mean more. And if you're worrying about this being a shipboard acquaintance—the company is keeping me around New York a month or so longer." ("If I go on seeing him every day for a month," she realized, "I'm gone.") "What are you doing this morning, Connie, after we get through the customs?"

"I'll have to go on up to my apartment, to look over nine days' mail." (Including, she hoped, a contract from St. Thorkilda's.)

"Well, I don't have to report at the office today; I'll go up with

"I told Miss Ridgefield that she was one of the boys," Mr. Friedenthal confessed. "But she's evidently something better than that."

By

ELMER DAVIS

The love-story of a young woman who served for three weeks on a blue-ribbon jury.

Illustrated by CLEMENT DONSHEA

you; and when you've read your mail, we'll go somewhere for lunch; and then we might finish off the day with dinner and dancing at the Rainbow Room."

"Hugh, we've simply got to stop spending all our time together, the way we've been doing! You can't go uptown with me—and I'll be too busy to lunch with anybody. You'd keep on arguing, and—I hate to be pushed!"

"Oh, I can see how you feel," he said wearily. "But you see how *I* feel: I want you—and if I don't get you now I may never see you again."

"I know, my dear. . . . I don't suppose there'd be any harm in our dining together and dancing a bit in the Rainbow Room."

Perhaps that was weakness; but if you like a man at breakfast—

So she got through the customs, and into a taxi, and started home. She had bought a morning paper, but Hugh was so much on her mind that she barely glanced at the front page; noting without interest that the trial of Sylvanus Magargle would begin this morning in the Court of General Sessions before Judge Schenken and a blue-ribbon jury.

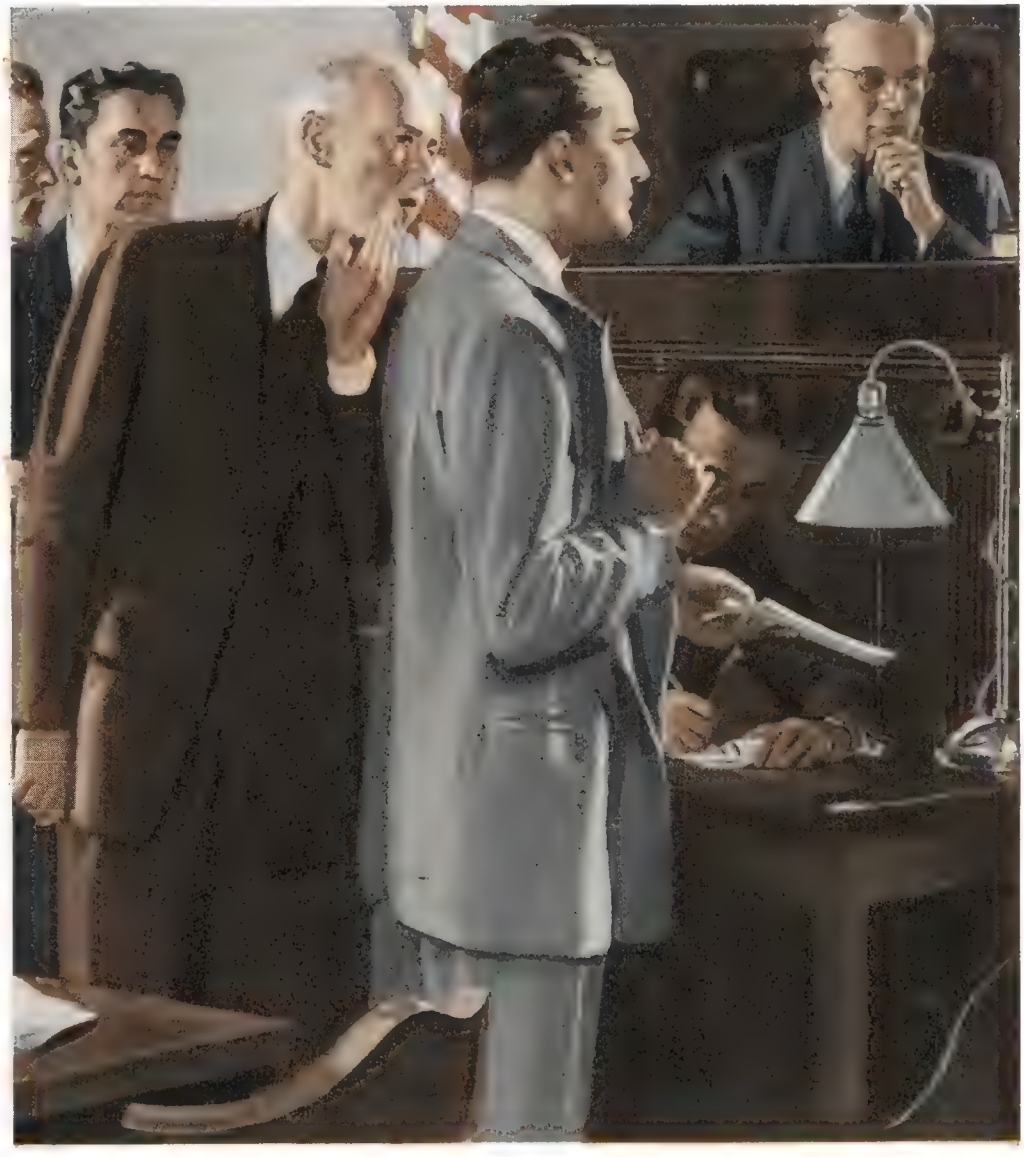
There was a stack of mail at her door—mostly advertisements, but three or four letters that looked like something. One of them was from the head mistress of St. Thorkilda's; she tore it open in nervous haste.

"My dear Miss Ridgefield:

"On account of our reduced budget, the post for which you were being considered will not be filled for the academic year 1939-40. We shall, however, keep your application on file, and hope to be able to add you to our staff next year."

Next year! A lot that helped, when she had barely enough to live on till the schools opened next month. Small hope of getting another job so late as this; all her plans had been built on that job at St. Thorkilda's—in town, so that she could go on with her studies at Columbia. Hugh had offered her another job, of course; and if she saw him, in this mood of desperation— But that wouldn't be fair, to him or to herself. She wouldn't be pushed, and she wouldn't marry him by default. Yet what else—

These other letters: One of them was from a Vassar classmate, teaching at a school in Westchester. Their French teacher, she wrote, was married to a man whose company might transfer him to Chicago in October. It wasn't sure yet, but if Connie would file an application now— That might be the way out—in October. But her money wouldn't last that long; and if she had nothing to do in the meantime but play around with Hugh—



The District Attorney was going to challenge her, but an assistant whispered that he re-

Just one more letter; she opened it, looked blankly at a pink slip. The County of New York summoned her to attend in Part IV of the Court of General Sessions at 10 A. M. on Monday, August 22nd—today!—to be ready to serve as a special juror in the case of the People *vs.* Sylvanus Magargle.

Last year, when women had first been allowed to serve—if they chose—on New York juries, she had sent in an application out of mere curiosity; but she had never been called before. Now—she'd have to hurry to get there on time, and the slip warned her that there was a penalty of fifty dollars for disregarding this notice. But she didn't want to disregard it. If she happened to be chosen as a juror, she'd be too busy, while the trial lasted, to see too dangerously much of Hugh. . . . And jurors got paid—three dollars a day. She needed that, with no hope of a job till October.

The courtroom of Part IV was jammed—lawyers inside the railings, and a swarm of newspaper-men at the long tables outside the railings, for this trial was important. Farther back, the long benches had little room for the sort of sightseers who like to show that they have influence enough to get admitted to a big trial. Those benches were crowded with men—most of them elderly, all rather well dressed, rather intelligent-looking; talesmen called on the special panel, from which are drawn what the newspapers like to call blue-ribbon juries.

But Connie's pink slip got her past the guards at the door, and she didn't dream that they supposed she had come down to offer excuses for an absent husband. As she came in, an attendant was saying, "Sign your slips, please," and collecting them; she handed him hers; somebody gave her a seat—and then they all stood up as the judge entered. But it took a long time to get the trial started; dozens of jurors tried to get the judge to excuse them, usually in vain. It was past eleven when the clerk spun the wheel into which he had dropped the slips, drew one out, and called:

"Edward T. Mayberry!"

This first talesman, an austere-looking architect, was questioned by counsel and presently excused; he was a friend of one of the witnesses in the case. The next was examined at length; Connie thought he would surely be accepted, but finally the District Attorney snapped "Challenged!" And so on, till the court recessed for lunch, with the jury-box still empty. Connie had eagerly followed the questions and answers, beginning to perceive that there was more in this case than appeared on the surface. Over her lunch at a drug-store counter—her first lunch in ten days without Hugh across the table—she wondered if ever she could answer all their questions satisfactorily, and get the job.

She came back at two o'clock, sat down, heard somebody behind

her whisper "Hello"—and looked around, to see Stacy Marill. She had met him at a dinner in June, and that first meeting had been the last; he was going abroad on business the next day. But they had clicked instantly; she had thought a lot about him, since—till she took a cruise and met Hugh.

"What are you doing here?" he asked in an undertone.

"Oh, I'm called on the jury." (He was visibly surprised at that.) "And you too?"

"Yes. . . . I tried to get the judge to let me off—I've only been back two weeks; but he wouldn't—and I'm glad, now. How about that lunch?" (She recalled that in June they had made a date for lunch after he came back.) "I called you up twice last week," he said, "but nobody answered."

membered Connie's mother, who used to lecture on good government.

"I've been on a cruise—just back this morning."

Then the judge came in, and they had to stop talking. But it gave her a glow of pleasure that he hadn't forgotten that date.

One by one men were called to the stand, questioned, and finally challenged by one side or the other; Connie was beginning to wonder if they'd ever get any jurors at all, when at a quarter past three Mr. Benjamin Friedenthal, a retired insurance executive, proved satisfactory to both prosecution and defense. Stout, gray-haired, genial, he took his seat in the box; and for an hour he sat there alone. The judge was growing impatient now, taking a hand in the questioning himself; Connie could see that he wanted to get going. . . . The wheel spun again, the clerk called out—

"Conway Ridgefield."

Absurdly, her knees were trembling as she hurried down the aisle and around the jury-box toward the stand. The press table buzzed; an attendant was telling her to hold up her right hand, and rattling off a lot of words of which she understood only the concluding "So help you God." Nervously she murmured, "I do," took her seat, gave her name and address.

"You are Conway Ridgefield?" the judge asked. "Miss Conway Ridgefield?"

"Yes sir. It's a family name. I was the only child, so I got it."

He had thought there were no women on the special panel. Some slip in the office of the Commissioner of Jurors, probably; but here she was—

"Well, you might find it inconvenient to serve in this case, Miss Ridgefield. It may last three weeks. You have other things to do, no doubt."

"I haven't, Your Honor. I—I'm not employed, just now."

"But in a case of this sort it is usual to seclude the jury, to prevent any possibility of outside influence, however innocently intended. You would have to live at a hotel—at the State's expense, of course—with no company but the other jurors. That might embarrass you, perhaps."

Three weeks with all expenses paid, three dollars a day besides—

"Not at all," she said cheerfully. "I've lived in hotels before."

The judge frowned. It would be inconvenient to have a lone woman on this jury; but to dismiss her without examination, when she wanted to serve— If Magargle were convicted, he would appeal; every detail of the case would come under the scrutiny of the higher courts, and a prudent judge had better play it safe. She'd certainly be challenged, anyway.

"Very well," he said. "Proceed with the examination."

Answering the questions of the District Attorney, and then of counsel for the defense, she didn't feel like a talesman; she was a job-hunter, desperately trying to prove her fitness for a job she had to get. She knew the question that gave more trouble than any other; and luckily she had an answer for that, when counsel for the defense got around to it.

"I suppose you've read about this case in the papers, Miss Ridgefield?"

"I saw something about it this morning—that's all." He looked rather skeptical. "I've been on a cruise," she explained. "Before that I was studying too hard at the university to have time to read the papers."

That was true; and because she was young and blonde and obviously well intentioned, it sounded true—as it might not if a man had said it. He asked a few more questions; then there was a tense pause—

The District Attorney was going to challenge her; but one of his assistants pulled his sleeve, whispered in his ear that he remembered Connie's mother, who used to lecture on good government for the League of Women Voters. Counsel for the defense had meant to challenge her too; but Sylvanus Magargle pulled his sleeve, whispered in his ear.

"Satisfactory to the People," said the District Attorney.

"Satisfactory," echoed counsel for the defense.

"I got the job!" thought Connie exultantly, and had taken her seat in the box before she realized that for three weeks she wouldn't see Hugh at all. Exactly what she needed, to recover her balance; still—

After that things moved faster; by the time court adjourned, three more men—all gray-haired—had been chosen. But they weren't news. When old Dan Marshlane of the *Star-Dispatch* sat down in his office that evening to write the story of the first day of the trial, he began:

"The blue-ribbon jury that is to decide the guilt or innocence of Sylvanus Magargle will contain one pink-ribbon juror."

The feature writer who was covering the trial from the woman's angle read that over his shoulder, and sniffed scornfully.

"I'll bet there isn't a pink ribbon on her," she said. "She'd wear a white slip, with that dress; and underneath, with a figure like hers—"

"Don't go telling me what she is or isn't wearing," Dan grunted. "I'm sixty-seven and not interested. But that's a good line—from now on everybody will call her the pink-ribbon juror."

WHEN court adjourned, a red-faced, white-haired man in a blue uniform marshaled the jury downstairs to the waiting bus that was to take them to the hotel, under guard.

"Now?" Connie gasped. "But I've got to go home and get some clothes!"

"Your family can bring them down to the hotel," said the white-haired guard. "Oh—you live alone? That's different. But if you'll give me your key— Could you describe what you want so a policewoman could get it?"

"No need to describe it," she said, laughing at his embarrassment. "All my summer clothes are in a couple of bags I never had time to unpack."

As she got into the bus, the elderly Mr. Friedenthal smiled paternally.

"Your first jury service, Miss Ridgefield?" She nodded. "It's my fourteenth," he said, "and the first time I've ever been locked up. However, they'll make us comfortable; the driver tells me they're putting us up at the Hotel Stupendous. It has a special floor for women, and you're to live there, with the floor-clerk as chaperon. The rest of us are on the floor below—all singles, with a big parlor as dining-room and lounge. But no doubt they'll let you take your meals in your room, if you'd rather."

"Why should I rather?" she asked him. "We're all on the jury together, aren't we?"

Mr. Friedenthal beamed at his colleagues.

"Gentlemen, we needn't worry about this little lady. While she's with us, she'll just be one of the boys."

HER room was comfortable; but when she tried to telephone to Hugh, the instrument seemed dead. She tried awhile, then went out and told the floor-clerk—an iron-jawed woman who looked like a safe chaperon for anybody—that her telephone was out of order.

"Yes, and it stays out of order till the trial's over," said the other. "Jurors are allowed to make emergency calls, but only from a public phone—like this one on my desk—with a court attendant standing by."

"But that's perfectly ridiculous—" Connie began.

"Tell the judge," said the iron-jawed one. "I didn't make the rules. But if you want to phone, I'll send for Mr. Flanagan and see if it's O.K." She did so, and presently the red-faced, white-haired guard joined them.

"Do you mean to say," Connie demanded, "that I can't even have a private telephone conversation all the time this trial is going on?"

"Now, lady, there's a law against tampering with jurors—which means tryin' to influence them in any way; and in a case like this, we can't take chances. However, I'm an officer of the Court; if you want to make an emergency call to your home or office, I'll keep your secrets."

"There's nobody at home, and I haven't any office—but this is an emergency call, just the same."

He looked very stern and official.

"What is the nature of the emergency?"

"I—I had a date for dinner. And now I've got to break it."

"I see." He cleared his throat. "In my opinion," he pronounced, "that constitutes an emergency. . . . And give the young fellow my sympathy."

So she called the club, and presently heard Hugh's voice.

"Connie! How are you? I'm just starting up to your apart ment."

"But I'm not there. I'm at—" Flanagan shook his head, an she remembered that this was supposed to be a secret. "I—don't dare tell you."

"Connie! You—you haven't been kidnaped?"

She had to laugh at that.

"No, darling. I'm on the Magargle jury." She wouldn't hav risked calling him *darling* face to face; but over miles of wir when they wouldn't see each other for so long—well, it might mak him feel better. But he didn't seem to feel much better, after sh had explained it all.

"You mean I can't se you at all for three weeks? he exploded.

"But that's not my fault There's a law against tan pering with jurors. I mean she corrected in confusio "trying to influence them

"I might try to influenc you," he admitted, "but n about the Magargle cas Why on earth did you ev let yourself in for this People can always get off a jury. You could have sa you were prejudiced—"

"But I'm not. Besides, need the money."

"And besides," he sai bitterly, "you're afraid me. Sorry."

"Oh, my dear! It wasn that—not much, anyway she amended candidly. "I'd realized from the sta that I couldn't see you all, I might not— But you still be here when the tri is over; we can see ea other then." (And witho the momentum of shi board.)

"But for three weeks," I said gloomily, "eleven oth men are going to be wi you all day long—as if y were on a desert island. suppose eleven are saf than one, but—"

She couldn't help laug ing.

"They're safe anywa Hugh. They're all old me so far. And after all," sh said, "if I fell for just an body on a desert island, wouldn't seem to mean an thing. Would it?"

"I know what it meant me, Connie. And I ho that when the trial is ov you'll agree with me." But he didn't sound hopeful.

And no wonder; for she felt as she hung up, that Hugh, and t cruise, were receding into history. Now she belonged to the jur she must go down to dinner with four elderly men she'd nev seen before. That wouldn't be much fun.

BUT Mr. Benjamin Friedenthal received her with old-fashion gallantry, seating her beside him at the head of the table, a to her relief there was a cocktail at her plate.

"The County of New York allows us one drink a day," he to her. "A little rigorous, but we'd better be grateful for what get. Well, gentlemen, since the court has forbidden us to discu the case even among ourselves, I ask you what you think of t Giants' chances for the pennant."

His tact and suavity would have made a success of any gathe ing. After dinner he suggested a game of bridge. Connie lov it, and played well, but she didn't suppose the men would wa her. However, one of them didn't play, *(Please turn to page 9*

Book Suggestions For April

by HARRY HANSEN

THIS month's recommended reading is not for those who want to kill an idle hour with a fanciful tale that leaves no mark upon the memory, but for those determined not to miss a great, courageous work of modern times. It is called "Summer, 1914," and is the final half of that story of the *Thibault* family of Paris for which its author, Roger Martin du Gard, already has received the Nobel Prize.

It is a very long, detailed, intimate story. It shows how the two *Thibault* brothers—*Jacques* the artist, and *Antoine* the scientist, are swept into the catastrophe of war; hapless individuals whose brilliant minds and high intentions become playthings of chance. A determined pacifist, *Jacques* tries to start an anti-militarist rising in the armies; a specialist in gas, *Antoine* accidentally falls a victim to it in a chance encounter. Here are portrayed the distress and helplessness of the intelligent individual before mass hysteria, and it will be easy to apply the dilemma of the *Thibaults* to modern France.

Your understanding of this interesting family, and your pleasure in the writing of Roger Martin du Gard, will be increased if first you read "The Thibaults," which appeared in 1939, and then read "Summer, 1914." And because a novelist so often crystallizes the feelings of human beings during great events, you may find of interest "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," by Blasco Ibañez, a very different type of novel about the war.

A basis for studying the successive steps by which Europe plunged into war today is to be found in "Night Over Europe," by Frederick L. Schuman, Williams College professor of government, which interprets the events of 1939-'40. Prof. Schuman is for the "all-out" war on Hitlerism.

"Summer, 1914," by Roger Martin du Gard. Viking Press, $3.50. "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," by Blasco Ibañez, new edition, E. P. Dutton & Co., $2.50. "Night Over Europe," by Frederick L. Schuman, Alfred A. Knopf, $3.50.

This noted critic will briefly review in each issue the recently published book he deems the most interesting

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CHESTERFIELD

MISS GRAY EYES

(Continued from page 19)

night trying to dig up some information about that girl with thirty million smackers. There was nothing wrong with Ned, he reflected, changing the needle of the gramophone, except his youth. Thirty-two. Why, he was just a boy in spite of all his experiences in Abyssinia, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Poland, France and England. Imagine any seasoned foreign correspondent getting into a stew because of the stupidity of the home office. That's what the home office existed for—to cable asinine orders! How about that guy in Paris who was covering the flight of the French Government to Tours, and who was ordered to be dead sure to cable a detailed description of the wardrobe and the jewelry of some ex-premier's lady friend? And what about that other guy in Berlin who right in the middle of the Munich crisis was told to drop everything and find out what was Hitler's favorite breakfast-food? Jim could almost see Ned's face, had he been in the place of either of those guys. Well, give him time, just give him time!

Chapter Two

THE all-clear signal sounded at half-past six. For over eight hours the German raiders had unloaded their cargoes over London, but now that the sun was about to rise, the buzzing Spitfires were looking in vain for Hitler's messengers.

Ned was sitting on the bed in his room when the telephone rang.

"The car is here, sir."

The car? What car was the man talking about? Oh, yes, of course, of course. . . . He groaned. Never before in his life had he been so sleepy.

"Look, here's what I want you to tell the gentleman in the car—"

But the clerk had already hung up. Idiot! Ned hung up too. On second thought, he decided, it would be better to deliver his carefully rehearsed speech in person. After all, he was dealing not with a chauffeur, but with a representative of the British Admiralty. He dashed cold water on his face, brushed his hair, put on his coat and went out. Just as he opened his door, he saw his neighbor, an elderly lady who was taken each night to the air-shelter downstairs in a wheel-chair. They had struck up a fast friendship the evening Ned suggested there ought to be a special shelter set aside for the use of snorers only, a suggestion which later on was adopted by several fashionable West End hotels.

"Good morning," he said stiffly.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Briarcliffe. Good morning, good morning. I was beginning to worry about you. I was looking for you last night, but could not find you."

"I was visiting with some friends in a shelter near by."

He could not very well waste his time explaining to her that he had spent the entire night tracking down a secretary of the Polish embassy in London, and pumping that gentleman for information about the girl who had escaped from a concentration-camp near Posnan.

"I see, I see. Well, today is the day, isn't it? I want you to know, Mr. Briarcliffe, that we shall all be looking forward to reading your story about the convoys. I wish I were a young man instead of a crippled and good-for-nothing old woman. What wouldn't I give to be able to take that trip! God bless you, my boy."

Ned bowed and proceeded on his way. The encounter affected him. He could argue with a big bruiser like Jim Richallson, but what could he say to a paralyzed old lady?

Two men were waiting for him in the lobby: a navy officer and a civilian. They were talking to a clerk. When Ned approached the desk, he recognized the fellow in mufti—the notorious Mr. Jitters of the Ministry of Information. His name was not Jitters, but the American correspondents in London insisted that it should have been. He saw danger everywhere, and the legend had it that his definition of a parachutist was a man who did not go to Cambridge. No love was lost between him and Ned. He went out of his way to keep "that flamboyant American" from obtaining worth-while information. Ned retaliated by sending dispatches ridiculing "the horse-and-buggy minds that are trying to censor the Messerschmitts out of the London skies."

That of all the employees of the Ministry of Information, Mr. Jitters should have been the one chosen to introduce the Zenith Newspapers Syndicate to His Majesty's Navy was just a piece of rotten luck. All of a sudden, Ned decided he would not deliver his speech. He would not give that much satisfaction. He would simply say—he would simply say— For the life of him, he did not know what he was going to say.

Mr. Jitters was already talking—in his usual patronizing, highly irritating manner.

"Ah, there he is, Commander—the chap who is going to tell the people of the Western Hemisphere about our convoy system. . . . Mr. Briarcliffe—Commander Rawsdon."

Ned shook hands with the Commander, a tall blond man with bushy eyebrows and a ruddy complexion.

"All set, Mr. Briarcliffe?"

"Well," said Ned, "it's this way: Something came up last night—"

Mr. Jitters laughed derisively.

"You don't mean to tell us, old boy, that you have decided to adapt the tactics of the Italian Navy and remain in, shall I say, the home waters?"

For two cents Ned would have knocked him down.

"I have decided nothing of the sort, sir. What I mean is that I received an important cablegram from the home office yesterday and had to spend the whole night executing their orders. I got back to the hotel just a few minutes ahead of you."

The Commander looked at his wristwatch.

"If it's the question of packing your bag, Mr. Briarcliffe, we've still got fifteen minutes to spare."

Mr. Jitters smiled. His eyes said: "Three to one, the American chap is trying to get out of it."

There was only one thing for Ned to do. He did it.

"Thanks, Commander," he said. "I hope it won't take me that long."

He went upstairs and began to pack. His throat was parched. He was furious—with himself even more than with Mr. Jitters. What was the matter with him, anyway? Why couldn't he have come out and admitted openly and frankly that a man would be a damned fool to risk his life for the sake of a by-line and a lousy two hundred bucks a week. False pride. That was the trouble with him. False, asinine pride! Got ashamed before that clear-eyed Commander. Didn't have the guts to tell him that it was one thing to sacrifice all for one's country, and another thing to stick one's neck in a noose just to please one's half-witted employer.

His eye fell on his typewriter. It was a good thing, at least, that he had not had time enough to cable his resignation to the Zenith people. He would have felt doubly foolish now. He put a sheet of paper in the typewriter.

> Am sailing today. Nothing known here about the young Countess except that a secretary of Polish embassy who saw her last two years ago says you're right about the size and the color of her eyes. He also believes the Nazis were trying to make her turn her American estate over to the Reich. But that's pure speculation. Local newspapers no help. More interested in last night's raid than all the Polish girls in the world. They are funny that way.

So much for Countess Badrovska. Ned closed the typewriter, gave a last look to the room with its "unsurpassed" (according to the management of the hotel) view of the Embankment and the river, sighed deeply and phoned for the bellboy.

A FEW minutes later he was riding through the streets of London in a long black car of the Admiralty, and was asking the Commander all sorts of questions. Now that he was going through with it, he could just as well try to learn what there was to be learned about this convoy business. First of all, what port was he sailing from, and what was the name of the ship he was assigned to?

"We will sail from somewhere in England, Mr. Briarcliffe. There won't be any name on your ship. All names are removed from all vessels in a convoy shortly before sailing."

"Very, very enlightening."

The Commander shrugged. Rules were rules, he said.

"I suppose so. Now then, would it be too much to ask how many ships will be in our convoy."

"An ordinary convoy consists of from fifteen to thirty ships, Mr. Briarcliffe."

"An ordinary convoy? Are you hinting by any chance that there will be something extraordinary about our convoy?"

The Commander made a brave attempt at smiling.

"Not at all, Mr. Briarcliffe. Ours will be an ordinary westbound convoy, carrying whatever goods England has to export nowadays. Some whisky, I dare say,

some woolens and things like that. Coming back, we will be carrying a more important cargo—planes and guns and tanks."

THE Commander, thought Ned, was making up in optimism what he was lacking in conversation. They had yet to reach the port of embarkation, but Rawsdon was already talking about the return trip.

"Looks to me," said Ned after a silence, "as if we were traveling in the direction of Liverpool. But never mind that. Tell me more about the convoys."

"Well, Mr. Briarcliffe, there is really not much to tell. It was one of your American admirals, the late Admiral Sims, who convinced our Admiralty in 1917 that the convoy idea was a practical one. Not much changed since those days, except that now we have to worry not only about submarines but about bombing-planes as well. In your case, for instance, you won't be sure that you have said good-by to those Stuka lads until the end of your second day out."

"Meaning by that, that we won't be traveling any too fast."

"No convoy can travel faster than the slowest ship in its column. We naturally do our best to gather ships of the same relative speed in each convoy, but unfortunately that is not always possible. Beggars can't be choosers, you know."

Ned nodded. He certainly did know that.

"How do the ships communicate with each other? By radio?"

"God forbid! Fancy our letting the subs listen to our messages! They communicate by signals, of course."

"By signals? But then they must be traveling in a file."

"Not more than five hundred yards apart."

"Isn't it pretty dangerous?"

"Nothing is safe about a convoy, as you will discover in a short while."

"What do the destroyers do? Circle round and alongside of a convoy, I presume."

The Commander gave him a pitying look.

"You presume too much, Mr. Briarcliffe. Gone are the days when we were able to spare destroyers for each and every convoy. Most of the escorting is being done now by armed merchantmen."

Ned whistled. Somehow he could not visualize an armed merchantman providing much competition for a pack of submarines.

"One more question, Commander, and I will shut up. Comes the attack by subs, what happens?"

"The convoy scatters, to sail zigzag courses. The escort ships rush to the scene of the attack, put up what fight they can, pick up survivors and— Well, I'm afraid that's all there is to it. I wouldn't be too morbid about it, however. You'd be surprised how often the Jerry subs get the worst of it."

"Before or after they attack a ship?"

"That's not the point. We're naturally reconciled to the idea that not every ship will reach the other side. The trick is to lose as few of them as possible. The Admiralty, I imagine, would wish nothing better than to keep the losses down to, say, five per cent of the ships included in a convoy."

"I see," said Ned. All he could see was that the Admiralty and Edward L. Briarcliffe did not see exactly eye to eye when it came to percentages. For his part, he was particularly interested in the ship he was going to travel on. Would it be within those five per cent the Admiralty was prepared to lose, or within the ninety-five per cent it hoped to save?

He glanced through the window. Now that they had left London behind, the ravage wrought by the air-raids was becoming less and less discernible. Had it not been for the complete disappearance of road signs, the country would have looked as it always looked in December.

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"Not much activity in those fields, is there, Commander?"

"You'd be surprised, Mr. Briarcliffe. Take another good look at the stretch of land right ahead of us, and you will discern a camouflaged anti-aircraft post."

Ned strained his eyes, but he saw nothing. Just a deserted field. He yawned. The first thing he knew, he was asleep. When he woke up again, the car was making its way, slowly and carefully, through the streets of a severely bombed large city.

"Where are we?" he asked drowsily.

The Commander avoided answering the question.

"We are just in time," he said. "In ten minutes the sun will be over the yardarm."

A heavy rain was falling steadily. It looked as though the sun would be lucky, indeed, if it managed to break through the clouds within the next ten days. The Commander, decided Ned, was an incurable optimist.

Presently the car came to a stop, in front of a partly demolished building near the water-front.

A pink-cheeked lieutenant greeted the Commander and supervised the unloading of the bags.

"Let's hurry," he said cheerfully. "The sun is over the yardarm."

Ned blinked. He felt distinctly annoyed by now. Why was everybody trying to kid him?

The mystery was solved a minute later when on entering an office full of navy officers, Ned was handed a glass containing gin-and-bitters. "The sun is over the yardarm" turned out to be His Britannic Majesty's Navy's description of the war-time custom of serving gin-and-bitters at eleven A.M. sharp.

Everybody drank in silence. The ceremony over, a white-haired man carrying the insignia of the Distinguished Cross on his coat raised his hand.

"And now, gentlemen," he said, "I shall distribute the orders."

The younger officers stood aside. The older ones—about a score of them—approached the speaker and were each handed a large sealed envelope.

Commander Rawsdon put his envelope in his breast pocket and motioned to Ned.

"Follow me, Mr. Briarcliffe. You're to travel on my ship."

On the way out, he explained the meaning of the ceremony. The white-haired man was in command of the convoy. He, and he only, knew the complete instructions of the Admiralty. The others, the commanders of the escort vessels as well as the commanders of the ships in convoy, were to open their sealed orders from day to day and to follow them religiously.

"But how can the Admiralty anticipate each and every move of the submarines and the bombers?"

"It cannot. Whenever a change of orders is advisable, the commander of the convoy will signal to us. He will be in charge of the largest escort vessel."

"How about you and me?"

"Ours will be one of the smaller escort vessels. Very likely you will recognize her. In better days she used to be a great favorite of those Americans who could afford a pleasure cruise."

"What's her name?"

"I sha'n't deprive you of the pleasure of discovering it all by yourself."

"The *Carinthia?*"

"Hardly. The *Carinthia,* God bless her old soul, went down months and months ago."

Ned stood still. It was as if the Commander had told him that one of his dearest friend had passed away, unknown to him.

"I crossed on her half a dozen times."

The Commander nodded gravely.

"I know, I know. It's quite a shock. Well, let's go, Mr. Briarcliffe. The Sunderlands have already left, and are scouting for the submarines. The mine-sweepers, too, have been on the job for a couple of hours by now. It's our turn. Your great adventure is about to begin."

COMMANDER RAWSDON was wrong. Twenty hours were to pass before anything resembling even a small adventure took place in the life of Ned Briarcliffe. His first day and first night aboard the

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escort vessel were singularly devoid of excitement. Not that he was itching to see the convoy attacked, but it seemed strange to him that not even the ever-curious German bombers should evidence the slightest interest in eighteen British ships on their way to the Arsenal of the Empire.

What entries he was able to make in his diary had a purely personal interest. Not a line suggested good copy for a syndicated story.

HE recognized the identity of the vessel he was on.

"Last time I was aboard her," he jotted down, "I was recuperating from a severe case of grippe and was told by my doctor to take 'one of those sixteen-day Caribbean pick-ups.' I remember raising hell with the purser because instead of having been assigned to a double cabin with a private bath on Deck A—as promised by the Publicity Department of the Line—I was given a single bathless cabin on Deck D and had to walk all of ten feet in the corridor to get into my bath. . . . 'You don't give a damn about your good will with the newspapers, do you?' I asked him. . . . Too bad there is no one aboard this time who would listen to my complaints about the accommodations. A six-by-eight cubbyhole! No bed, just a bunk. No wardrobe. Not even a chair. There's a wash-basin but no hot water. As for bathing, ye gods! The nearest bathroom is two decks above. The line forms on the right. Average waiting-period about half an hour. The dining-salon, the library, the writing-room, the night-club, the bar, the luxurious furnishings, everything that the Line was so proud of, has been ripped out. No one, not even the Commander, is allowed more sleeping-room than absolutely necessary. Every inch of space is being saved for those new 1940 model passengers: the Douglases, the Curtisses and the Boeings on the eastbound crossings, the whisky, woolens, leather goods and the like on the westbound crossings. . . .

"This afternon, while taking my constitutional on what used to be the exercise deck, I came across the pale of the shuffleboard fiends. Only sixteen months or so ago, vacationing school-teachers from Iowa and well-padded gentlemen from the wholesale district in New York, were trying to shed off pounds on this spot. Now —now I saw a stern gunner keeping well within the prescribed six feet of his gun and eying a lifeboat swung overside for 'immediate use.' . . . As the Commander says, 'life aboard an escort vessel is one of tensely expectant dullness.' . . . Anything is likely to happen any moment. So far, nothing has. We are traveling in three columns, six ships in each. The escort vessels play the part of the sheepdogs. The Sunderland flying-boats keep on circling around the convoy looking in vain for a submarine. Should they detect one, they are supposed to drop bombs on her, and a smoke bomb to signal her location to the escorts.

"Should we be attacked by bombers while we are still close to the shore,—as we are now,—a squadron of Spitfires and Hurricanes will, we hope, come to our rescue. Shortly before dusk I was given a lecture by a petty officer for throwing a lighted cigarette overboard. No refuse of any kind, least of all lighted cigarettes, is allowed to be thrown overboard, for fear of indicating our course to the Fuehrer. They must have quite a garbage-can on this ship. . . . As I was saying good night to the Commander, he offered me his apologies. Said he was sorry that they failed to provide a better show for me on our first day out. Hoped they would 'improve' when they reach the sub's favorite hunting-ground, off Land's End."

Off Land's End was exactly the spot where Ned met adventure. It was seven in the morning and he was fast asleep in his cabin when the officer on duty saw something the nature of which he could not make out in the dim dawn, and he sounded the horn signaling to the chief escort. The ship shook, and Ned awoke with a start. He grabbed his belt and dashed out. He remembered what the Commander said to him the day before: at the first sign or even a suspicion of a submarine, the escort ships huddle together and begin to listen.

The Commander was already on the bridge when Ned got there.

"Don't be too excited," he said, peering through his binoculars. "It's not a submarine. So help me, it looks like one of those outboard motor affairs one sees at various regattas. What in the world is she doing there?"

He waited for the answering signal from the chief escort, then issued orders. They were to slow down, wait and find out what that silly little craft was doing off Land's End. The "old man" was advising caution. Evidently he suspected the Germans might have invented some new camouflage for a small torpedo-boat.

A few minutes passed. The gunners stood glued to their guns. Everybody was ready for an attack. Then the Commander laughed:

"It's no more a torpedo-boat than I am Admiral Nelson. It's just what I said: An outboard motor craft. Four people aboard. They're signaling. They don't know much about signaling, but the general idea is clear to me. They're in distress and are crying for help."

He motioned to the sailor by his side and reported his observations to the "old man." The answer came: *"Take them aboard but make no attempt at salvaging the craft. Exercise supreme caution."*

"Get ready," ordered the Commander.

The sailors, carrying rope ladders, took the assigned posts. Several more minutes elapsed. The motor of the pleasure craft must have been nearly dead, because a good swimmer could have covered those last remaining few hundred yards in less time. By now Ned could see the occupants of the little yacht in distress. One of them had no hat on.

"Commander," shouted Ned, "do you know that that hatless one—"

"Is a female," the Commander finished for him. "I knew it minutes ago. I watched her work on that dead motor."

He raised his hand. Sailors—a study in synchronized motion—swung a rope ladder over the side of the ship. The first one to climb aboard was the girl.

Three men followed. One was a stockily built, shortish fellow; the other two were tall and slender. There was not much difference between the attire of the girl and that of the men—all four had on shabby raincoats, sweaters and slacks—except that the men had managed to preserve their sou'westers, while the girl must have lost her hat in a fight with the gale, and her rich light-brown hair was disheveled and was flapping over her face and shoulders.

"What she needs is a permanent—" began Ned; then he stopped short. Now that she was walking along the deck toward the Commander's bridge, he saw something that had escaped him at first: Her eyes, her enormous gray eyes. Her face was deathly pale. There was not a touch of make-up on her cheeks or lips, but her eyes stood out like a couple of lanterns in a sea of fog. She was quite tall. In spite of the ordeal, she must have gone through she walked with that majestic gait—head up, straight and erect —which suggested an aristocrat or a show girl.

"I bet I know who she is," Ned said.

"Really, Mr. Briarcliffe! How interesting! Fancy your meeting someone you know in the open ocean off Land's End."

"I didn't say I knew her, Commander," Ned corrected, while he watched the girl. "I said I bet I know who she is. And I bet you she's that Polish-American girl who escaped from a German concentration-camp. The Jerry radio has been broadcasting her description, and—"

"If you don't mind, Mr. Briarcliffe—"

The group of four had almost reached them. "I prefer," the Commander added to Ned, "to conduct my own investigation. But first of all, we must dispose of their craft—just in case somebody wanted it left behind to give the Germans an idea as to our course."

Without raising his voice, he issued an order. A gun boomed. The tiny yacht collapsed at once.

THE girl and her companions had turned with the shot and they witnessed the sudden destruction of their little craft.

"Did you—have to do it?" she asked, shaken, when she faced the Commander again.

"Yes, miss," he answered; and he inquired, less brusquely, as he met her large gray eyes: "Could it have been of any further use to you?"

She shook her head as if, for the instant, she was unable to speak. "No," she said finally. "No. I suppose not. Yet—it had served us." She glanced at Briarcliffe, whom she caught unashamedly staring at her.

"This gentleman—" she appealed to the Commander; and after having steadied herself, she was trembling again. "This gentleman is—"

"A passenger — an American going home," the Briton told her. "The point, however, is not who he is, but who *you* are! Seeing that you speak English so well, would you mind enlightening me as to yourself and your friends—who's who and what in this affair. Have you papers?"

"You mean identity papers—passports and such things?"

The Englishman nodded. "That's it."

The girl gazed at him a long moment before she turned toward the spot in the sea where her little craft had sunk. "What would we have been doing in our boat—our boat that was—if we had all had papers?" she asked.

"Have any of you papers?"

"None of us. No."

"All right, then; we will take the account you will give of yourselves."

"Dating tonight?" asks this Deb...
"First have a Woodbury Facial Cocktail"

Miss Josette Daly and Cholly Knickerbocker, society's gossip columnist

Overheard at the Coq Rouge

Josette speaking: "You say my skin always looks so fresh and clear? Thanks, Cholly, but the laurels go to my Woodbury Facial Cocktail!

Here's my recipe:

"I work up a lather with Woodbury Soap; massage this well into my skin. I rinse in warm water, then cold, and I can feel the tingle, see the pink come back into my cheeks."

Miss Josette Guevara Daly

Lovely debutante of New York City and Tuxedo Park, selected for her exotic beauty by Cholly Knickerbocker, America's ace society commentator.

She adores dancing. Designs her own fashions. Has velvety skin, tinted like roses. Her before-dating advice:

"Before a big evening, a Woodbury Facial Cocktail is wonderfully refreshing to tired, drab skin. It brings sparkle to the skin and can make any girl more alluringly lovely." At the turn of the century gracious ladies used Woodbury Soap to bring romantic softness to their complexions. Today, Woodbury is the favorite glamour aid of popular girls everywhere.

This famous soap is made of finest oils; helps keep skin like creamy velvet. Use Woodbury for ten days, see the difference!

FOR THE SKIN YOU LOVE TO TOUCH

"Here?"

"No, miss. Not here."

"And I suppose you will search me—again," she said; and Ned saw that once more she was shaking.

"Have we—the English—searched you?" the Commander asked.

"Not the English. No. This is the first time I am in the hands of the English. This time—may a woman search me, please?"

And she put her hands to her body, as if protecting herself from insults of search. Ned took his eyes from her to glance at the Commander. There was no other woman aboard the ship, Ned knew.

"We will hear first your account of yourself," the Englishman evaded that issue.

The girl turned and spoke a single word to the shortish fellow who stood nearest of the three who had been with her on the little boat. Ned did not understand the word. He guessed it was a name—a Slavonic name; *Boradic* or something similar.

The man responded in several hurried words of a language which Ned did not know but which also sounded Slavonic.

"We are very hungry and thirsty," the girl said to the Commander. "We haven't had any food since yesterday." She glanced again uneasily at Ned, and he noticed that, for some reason, his presence seemed to prevent what otherwise she would say. "Do the English, before one is questioned, permit one a little food—or at least a little water—first?" she asked.

The Commander weighed the matter for a moment. "Mr. Hawkinson," he said to one of the officers at his shoulder, "you will take these four people to my quarters and see to it that they are given breakfast. I will join you shortly."

Mr. Hawkinson saluted and led the girl and her three companions away. This was too much for Ned.

"IS it all right for me to follow them, Commander?"

"It certainly is not, Mr. Briarcliffe. The prisoners of His Majesty's Navy are not subjects for interview under these conditions."

"Prisoners!" Ned objected. "Why do you call them prisoners? They are fugitives from a Nazi concentration-camp."

"So you know them all?"

"I know the girl; that is, I know who she is."

"Indeed!"

"She is the Countess Badrovska. She must be!"

"So that is her name!"

"She is a granddaughter of Chaddock Lincoln Pittfield."

"I don't know who he is, and I don't care."

"He's dead; but he was one of America's great men; and he left one of our great fortunes."

"Is that all?"

"And what's left of it today—and that's at least thirty million dollars—goes to this girl."

"What girl?"

"The girl you just picked up—his granddaughter, who was in a Nazi concentration-camp. Every newspaper in America—"

"Mr. Briarcliffe, I wish you would realize that we are aboard an escort and not in a newspaper office. I am not interested in how much money that girl may possess if she is the girl you say she is; having—as you say yourself—never seen her. Still less am I interested in her family history. All I know is that following the orders of my superior, I picked up four strange people under suspicious circumstances. They may be fugitives from a concentration-camp, as you are eager to think. Then again, they may have been planted by the Germans for purposes of their own in an attack on this convoy. In a newspaper office, if you make a serious mistake, you can correct it, I understand, in a later edition. In a convoy, if one makes a serious mistake, there is no—later edition. You must pardon me, therefore, if I do not join you in jumping to your diverting conclusion. And now I must leave you."

He started to walk away.

"One moment, Commander. Is it possible for me to send one short wireless message to my home office?"

Ned remembered the orders, but in the situation, he had to make the try. However, had he asked for permission to scuttle the ship, he scarcely could have aroused more scorn.

"A wireless? A news wireless from aboard an escort? Did anyone happen to call your attention, Mr. Briarcliffe, to the fact that we are engaged in a war?"

Ned went forward and stood alone watching the other ships in their steady plowing through the stubborn gray sea. Below that opaque, restless surface somewhere not far away lurked U-boats; and not one or two or three but five or ten or even fifteen together; for they operated now in packs, capable—if all could have their way—of sinking a complete convoy. Was it possible—was it conceivable that the girl just picked up had been "planted" there on the sea in some scheme of cooperation with them?

It was evident that Commander Rawsdon thought so. But she was too much like the description of Countess Ludwega Badrovska. Ned Briarcliffe had been a newspaper man long enough, and he had covered enough stories, to know that coincidence could crop up anywhere; yet it seemed to him altogether too much to believe that another girl so like her—yet not she—could have been picked up in an open boat out here at sea.

No; she *was* Ludwega. She must be.

Ned trusted to his intelligence and, even more at times, like most newspaper men, he trusted to his "hunches." Rarely indeed, when he had a "hunch" as strong as this one, had he been deceived. He was ready to go all out on his belief that this was the girl; she must be.

It bothered him a little that he found himself unable to think of her as impersonally as he should; a newspaper man ought to be as removed, as dispassionate about his subject as a surgeon; but about this girl, Ned could not be.

He was imagining her now as she would be gazing with her big gray eyes at the officer questioning her—or soon to question her, if they were letting her delay over breakfast. They would not examine her unpleasantly; certainly no man's hands would insult her body—her slender and lovely body, which stood so straight but which so suddenly was shaken by fear.

What, under other hands, had she been obliged to endure?

Ned Briarcliffe felt his fists clenching. He would like to strike someone somewhere whoever it was who had harmed her. What wonderful eyes she had! He could never forget them, so steady, so searching, and so frightened when she gazed at him. Why? Why had the sight of him disturbed her?

HE went down to breakfast at last, hoping to encounter the Commander but it was not until the "Sun-is-over-the-yardarm" ceremony that he came face to face with the skipper again.

"Have good news for you, my lad," announced Rawsdon, sipping his gin-and-bitters. "Thank your stars that you could not send that wireless of yours to New York."

Ned eyed him suspiciously. What was the joke?

"Really?" he said; he promised himself that from now on he would be just as casual and just as blasé as any of those gold-braided Britishers.

"Don't be angry, old man. The fact is that the beautiful female aboard is no more Countess Badrovska than I or you or Mr. Hawkinson."

"I don't believe it."

"You mean you don't want to believe it. You remind me of that German diplomat in Montevideo who spent hours looking at the good Ark Royal in the harbor and finally wound up by saying he did not believe it. It simply could not be the Ark Royal, he maintained, because the Fuehrer himself said that the Ark Royal had been torpedoed by one of his submarines."

"What has it got to do with Countess Badrovska?"

"About as much as she has to do with the Polish girl we rescued. Nothing."

"So she *is* Polish. You see, you see. . . . What did I tell you?"

"You told me that she is Countess Badrovska, a granddaughter of an American multimillionaire, worth some thirty million dollars in her own right. Well, I hate to disappoint you, my boy, but this girl hasn't got a sou-marquis. True enough, she was born in New York where her late father pursued the rather humble profession of window-washer, but that does not make her Countess Badrovska, does it now?"

"If she were born in New York, how come she decided to go back to Poland?"

"She didn't. Her parents did. They saved a bit of money, not enough to live in comfort in the States but enough to buy a farm in Poland. She was fourteen when they took her back to Poland."

"I don't believe it. Those enormous gray eyes—"

The Commander laughed heartily.

"So, according to your way of thinking, a girl must be a Countess and a granddaughter of a multimillionaire in order to afford to possess a pair of large gray eyes. Really, sir—"

"What happened to her parents?"

"Her father was killed during the siege of Warsaw. Her mother was put in a concentration-camp. The shortish fellow with her is her Polish fiancé. He helped her escape from the Nazis."

"How about the other two?"

"Both are French officers. Were taken war prisoners at Orleans. Didn't like the idea, escaped that very night and

I Was All In... But the Major's "33 to 1" SAVED THE DAY FOR ME!

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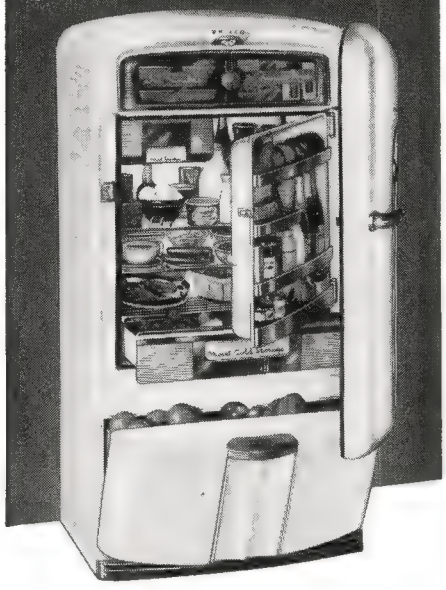

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were hiding around Brest, the home-town of the younger of the two. It was he who through his friends and connections got hold of that odd-looking self-sinking affair."

"Why did they take the Poles along?"

"Felt sorry for them, I suppose. And besides, it seems that neither of them is much of a sailor. So when they found out that both the Pole and his fiancée knew how to handle a boat they welcomed them with outstretched arms."

"I don't believe a word of it, Commander."

"Have it your way. And now, gentlemen, back to the bridge."

"Will you let me speak to the girl?"

"Certainly. Now that I've told you what I got out of her, perhaps you'll tell me your conclusions—when and if you correct them. Mr. Hawkinson will take you to her cabin."

Ned thanked him and understood. The Britisher was not so simple as he wanted to appear. It was plain that he had got from the girl, and her companions, the account which he had just repeated; it was plain, also, that he was not satisfied with it. The daughter of a window-washer! Indeed. . . . So, that's where she got her blue-blooded face, her gorgeous figure, her splendid bearing and her slender ankles—and those unforgettable eyes.

MR. HAWKINSON stopped at a small cabin half a dozen doors away from the Commander's quarters; he knocked on the door and called:

"Commander Rawsdon wishes you to receive this gentleman, Miss—

"Don't expect me to pronounce that savage name," he whispered to Ned and departed.

Ned heard the bolt, on the other side of the door, slide back; and slowly the door was opened.

"Oh—you!" the girl said; and Ned realized that though Mr. Hawkinson had not named him yet it seemed that the girl had expected him. At least, she was not greatly surprised.

She had been alone in the little cabin and, after he entered, she released the door and it swung shut and latched.

"How do you do?" Ned said, rather stupidly, for he felt himself suddenly at a loss as he faced her. Now that she had dressed her hair and washed her face, she was more disturbing to him than before. She was young and vital and lovely. Her blue sweater, made of some cheap and rough material, was clinging tightly to her slender but beautifully rounded body. Her gray eyes looked even bigger and softer than before. They quickly changed expression; at one moment, they were full of fear and at the next, the fear was gone and he found challenge only.

Ned noticed in a flash that she was hiding her hands. It pleased him. Commander Rawsdon himself could not have pretended that a daughter of a New York window-washer, who had worked on a farm in Poland, would have been ashamed of the fact that her hands were in need of a manicurist's services.

"Are you feeling better, Countess?" Ned plunged in.

He waited for a reaction. None came.

She merely nodded and said: "I am. Thanks a lot."

"You know something?" Ned taunted her. "I am afraid, Countess, that you will have to improve a bit on your accent and diction, if you want me to believe that you are just a farmer's daughter. To Commander Rawsdon, all Americans may sound alike—but you aren't dealing with an Englishman now."

"I know; you are an American. I saw it."

"Did you see also that I am an American newspaper man?"

"No; are you?"

"I am."

They both waited until at last she said: "And—what of that?"

"I know all about you, Countess."

She shook her head.

"You must be drunk," she said calmly. "Or joking in the American way. I know. When I was a very young girl in New York, my parents had a boarder who drank very much. Each time he was drunk, he called me either Princess or Countess; sometimes both."

"And I suppose," Ned said quickly, "that it was that boarder who taught you French."

That was a jump into darkness. Ned had no way of knowing whether or not she spoke French but he supposed that it was she and not her husky "fiancé"—whoever and whatever he might actually be—who had approached the two French officers in Brest. . . . If they *were* French officers and if the association of the four *had* begun at Brest.

"Wrong again," the girl said promptly. "I learned French first in New York, in the high school on the corner of Second Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, then in Poland from a French woman who worked as governess in a big house near my father's farm."

"Marvelous, marvelous, Countess! You didn't overlook a single detail. You're a regular Belasco, Countess Badrovska. I can see why you worked out all the points in your past to give to the Gestapo, if they caught you; but I must confess it baffles me now that you know you are on a British ship and bound for America, Countess Badrovska."

The girl laughed. Her teeth were very white and even.

"I shouldn't laugh, but I have heard the real Countess Badrovska is sitting in a concentration-camp and—"

Ned interrupted. "No; the Countess Badrovska has escaped."

The girl shook her head. "No; one does not so easily escape from a German concentration-camp."

"But she did. The Nazis have been spreading her description in the occupied countries on the radio—with a reward for her recapture."

"Then that is very bad for her; so I shall stop laughing. Yet imagine poor me being mistaken for Countess Badrovska. I always heard that American newspaper men are very simple and romantic. Now I know it."

NED decided it was time to play his last card.

"Look at me!" he demanded. "Look at me carefully! Haven't you seen me somewhere before?"

Her wonderful gray eyes gazed at him steadily, without challenge now and also without fright.

"I have not," she said, calmly and decisively.

"You do not tell the truth; or else your memory is very poor. Think back. Do you remember an American newspaperman in Warsaw, two years before the war, who came to interview your father at the Hotel Europe? It was nine in the morning and you were just going out for a ride in the park. Would you like me to tell you what you were wearing that morning?"

He hoped to God she would not. He had never been to Warsaw and he had never interviewed Count Badrovska—but a secretary of the Polish Embassy in London had told him about having met the young Countess at nine o'clock in the morning at the Hotel Europe, two years ago.

For the first time during their conversation the girl dropped her eyes. She was breathing heavily.

"Look," she began. "I am very, very tired, and—"

"Do you think, Countess, that once seeing you, I could ever forget you?"

The ship shook violently. From stem to stern. Ned heard the sound of running feet and he opened the door.

"What's going on?" he yelled.

"The convoy has been attacked," came the answer. "One ship is torpedoed and is sinking."

The girl jumped.

"You see, you see?" she cried. "Do you understand now, you idiot, why I lie—why I have to lie? Oh, can you not see, and help me?"

She dashed out; Ned ran out after her.

With an ever-increasing momentum, this fascinating novel of international intrigue and war-time romance sweeps forward in the forthcoming May installment to even more dramatic episodes.

OUR READERS SPEAK

(Continued from page 6)

tried four or five dozen contests *(tried);* kept up with Van Paassen and Maugham through REDBOOK (admired and mistrusted both), learned that pacifism is synonymous with somnambulism; and—do you know what?—have just concluded that much of the twenty-five years previous to the past five of my life have been wasted.

Mrs. Thos. W. Callahan,
Hollandale, Wisconsin.

Re: Starr Paret

Dear Sir:

Believe it or not, this is the first letter of praise I have written any magazine; but *who* is this author (or -ess) Starr Paret? I began reading "Her Lovely Independent Life," had a lovely dinner invitation awaiting me, but risked the ire of my hostess because I could not lay the magazine down until I had finished. Bring on the *Paret,* please.

Inez Downs Ashen,
Lincoln, Illinois.

(Editor's note: Miss Starr Paret lives in New York. She is working at present on a novel.)

"So yesterday we Hung the Mayor!"

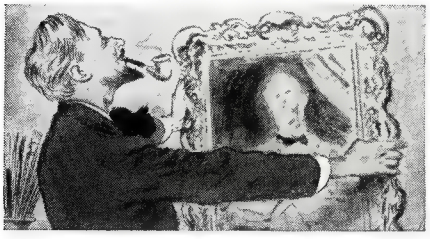
1. I was a portrait painter . . . with no portraits to paint. One day I learned that the mayor was in the market to get himself slapped on canvas. I hurried down to City Hall, but the mayor couldn't see me until evening. I decided to wait.

2. About 6 o'clock, a waiter lugged a tray of dinner into the mayor's office. A terrific howl went up. "Take it away!" bellowed His Honor, and the waiter came running out, looking scared to death and clutching a coffee pot.

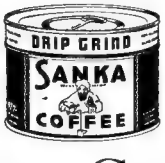
3. "The mayor never touches coffee!" yelped His Honor's secretary. "He wouldn't sleep a wink!" That was my cue. "He should try Sanka Coffee!" I said. "Whoever said that," shouted the mayor, "come in here!"

4. "What is Sanka Coffee?" the mayor demanded, as I came in. "Why should I try it?" "Because, Mr. Mayor," said I, "it's delicious . . . and it's 97% caffein-free, so it *can't* keep you awake!" "Who says so?" he grunted.

5. So I told him: "The Council on Foods of the American Medical Association says: 'Sanka Coffee is free from caffein effect and can be used when other coffee has been forbidden.'" He was impressed. "I'll try it!" he said.



6. Next day he phoned me. "You are appointed official portrait painter of this city!" he said. "I drank two cups of Sanka Coffee and never slept better! A lot of officials need their portraits painted . . . but begin with me!"



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TUNE IN . . . "WE, THE PEOPLE"—Tuesday evening. See your paper for time and station.

Mrs. W---- Solves the Case of Betty

Betty is up to her old tricks again. She needs a laxative badly, but she starts bawling the moment I reach for the bottle.

Cousin Alice suggested Ex-Lax. Gave some to Betty tonight and you should have seen her go for it! Simply loved its chocolate taste.

Betty slept like an angel. Ex-Lax worked fine this morning and it didn't upset her a bit. Thank goodness, I've solved that problem!

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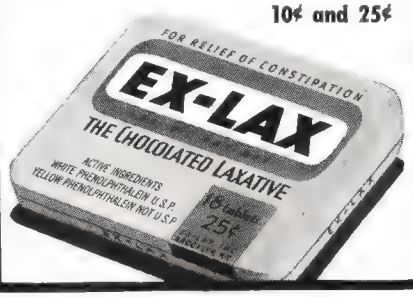

THE BEST THING OF ALL

(Continued from page 30)

"Quite drunk. We'll have to eat quickly; I have things to do."

"Hey, let me get straightened out on all this—"

"Nothing to fuss about, really," she explained. "It's Tompkins, our farmer. The horses haven't been fed, cows haven't been milked, and so on."

"And you're going to do what?"

"Chores. Tompkins has already been dismissed."

"You mean you just up and fired a drunken man?" He eyed her with new respect.

"Certainly I fired him. . . . Scrambled or fried?"

In a few minutes they sat down to the meal. Later, Christopher dried while she washed. "What are you going to do now?" he asked.

"Milk three cows and feed nine horses."

"After that, though?"

"Find someone to care for the stock until I can sell it and the farm."

"Listen; why don't you rent it instead, and let somebody else hold the responsibility until things pick up for you?"

"Who'd rent it?"

"Well, me, for instance. I think it'd be a swell place for my kennels. I could do wonders with my dogs over here."

She felt in the position of clutching at a straw. If she could get the burden of upkeep off her shoulders, she'd have time in which to turn around. But could he afford a rental of fifty dollars a month? She broached it to him tentatively.

"For all this?" he expostulated. "Lady, where's your business head?"

"Don't forget there's a hundred-dollar feed-bill to add to that—"

"For which I'll be getting enough dairy products to support not one kennel but two," he pointed out.

"Have you got a lease on that Westchester place you mentioned?"

"None at all," he said promptly. "I can get my stuff in here tomorrow."

Ann gasped. "You certainly move fast!"

TWO hours later they had finished the chores together and started back to the house. "I reek of horse liniment," Ann announced. *"Pfui!"*

"Not *pfui* at all—one of the better smells of life. I'm no rose myself."

"Just look at Rowena!"

Christopher followed her eyes to where the dog, who had been romping ahead with Gretel, suddenly stood at attention, the hair rising sharply across her back. He smiled. "Belligerent little pup."

Ann nodded. "I think I'll call her Rowdy for short. I wonder what she sees?"

For answer, Rowdy gave a low growl, and a moment later a gray kitten dashed out from the shrubbery, followed by a snarling shepherd mongrel. In two bounds the stray dog had the kitten, and a thin scream pierced the air.

"Stop! You brute, you devil!" Ann shrieked.

The mongrel stopped; it was not Ann's call that caused her to drop the kitten, however; it was Rowdy's menacing approach, with Gretel close behind. The kitten scurried back into the bushes. Ruff bristling, ears back, the mongrel stood ready for the Danes.

"That type of shepherd's a bad customer," Christopher announced. "We better get the pups out of this."

Before he could reach them, however, the mongrel had circled to Gretel's flank, leaving a crimson livid line on the Dane's shoulder. Then Rowdy charged in, and at once the three animals were a whirling mass.

Ann's mind spun in panic. Then she saw a long figure in the blur of dogs. He grabbed Rowdy by the legs and flung her, then separated Gretel and the mongrel. The fight was over. Ann's knees gave way with relief. "He's got all the nerve in the world," she thought.

The next moment a wave of giddy sickness swept her as she saw the hand which he was holding half-concealed against his jacket.

"You're hurt! We've got to rush you to a doctor!"

"It's nothing," he said, but she beckoned him imperiously.

"Never mind your old rattletrap," she forestalled him. "We'll take my car. I can push it up to sixty in a pinch."

He started to say something, but her motor was already going. "Hop in," she ordered. He grinned, and quite meekly did as he was told. . . .

It was already dark when they returned to the farm. Ann drove slowly, guarding against bumps that might jar his hand.

"You're to go to bed at once," she ordered matter-of-factly as they came to the house. "I'll rustle up some sort of supper and bring it on a tray."

"Oh, look here, I'm not a baby!" he objected.

"You're going to follow the doctor's instructions. He said you were to take it easy for twenty-four hours."

She lit the fire in the guest-room, turned down the bed, and found a suit of pajamas that belonged to Helen's husband. Then she hurried down to the kitchen. While she was waiting for the water to boil, she had a strange impulse to telephone Helen at Bar Haven.

She put the call through from the pantry extension.

"I'm at Broadfields." Ann avoided a discussion of giving Helen a start. "And I wanted to tell you that I've rented the place to a very nice man who raises dogs. Yes, he's taking it right away; in fact, he's already installed."

"Where?"

"Here." She explained briefly about the dog-fight. "He's safe in bed at this moment in one of your own husband's sky-blue pajamas. So you don't have to be upset."

Helen, however, was tremendously upset at this news. If he wasn't able to leave, Ann must call in Emma Jeeves at once, who would be glad to look after him at fifty cents an hour, and Ann should jump in her car and drive back to her apartment in New York without delay. "Promise me!" Helen commanded.

"I promise," Ann meekly said, and finished under her breath, "nothing of the sort, you conventional ninny—"

She was about to carry the tray upstairs when the telephone rang. Ten to one it was Tom Barston; ten to one, Helen had lost no time in getting in touch with him. Ten to one, Tom was personally going to supervise her safe return to New York and respectability. "Not if I know it," she muttered wrathfully.

But it wasn't Tom. There was already someone talking on the wire when she lifted the receiver. "I'll call them in the morning," a woman's voice was saying, and immediately after, Christopher's voice followed up with, "And Smith, you can also tell the Hartley people that I'll be away for a few days; they can wait."

Ann felt a surge of unreasonable pleasure. Then he wasn't going back—he was going to stay on at Broadfields. But to whom was he talking? Smith appeared to be the kind of woman a man would call Smith. Her voice emanated efficiency and competence.

"I have a little surprise for you," Smith went on. "Mrs. Wain arrived from the coast today. She's been trying to reach you."

"Oh," said Christopher Wain.

"What'll I tell her?"

He gave a short laugh. "Tell her I'm in Boston and I'll be back soon."

There was a sudden sharp impact somewhere within Ann's mind.

She picked up the tray. Helen was right; the thing to do was to go back to town at once. Under the circumstances, it was far wiser for Mrs. Wain to look after Mr. Wain. Doubtless he would get in touch with her as soon as she left.

IN New York, Ann soon discovered she would have to find another place to live, because the landlord objected to a Great Dane in a one-room apartment. After days of searching, she rooted out a dog-loving landlord, and all was well—except that Helen became suspicious at the change of address and telephoned from Maine to ask why. Was she by any chance trying to avoid Tom? In Helen's frank opinion—it was always frank—Ann was a fool.

Helen went on to the subject of Broadfields. What was this Mr. Wain doing there, besides raising dogs?

"I don't know," said Ann. "I haven't been there since the day I rented it to him."

"But if you rent your property, you must keep an eye on it!"

"You mean you advise me to drive up and look things over?"

"Definitely," said Helen sharply. "It's probably a shambles by this time."

"All right, then," Ann said suddenly. "I'll go up tomorrow—but only on your advice, you know."

Unfortunately, Ann awakened the next morning with a queer coldish tightening in her chest. Ill or not, however, she certainly had no intention of giving up her trip to Broadfields. And she felt better as soon as she hit the outskirts of the city. The day was lovely. Rowdy was beside herself with joy, alternately breathing down Ann's neck and slobbering up the window.

As Ann came within view of the farm, she drew the car to a stop with a sense that she was dreaming. The whole place wore the glory of a dream. Contrary to Helen's gloomy prophecy, there was fresh

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paint on the house and barns, and there were long stretches of well-kept lawn, and endless patterns of new hurdle fence running off toward smooth meadows. Christopher Wain must have spent thousands, she thought in rising panic. Trembling with the shock of it all, she sped up the driveway into the courtyard. Rowdy scrambled across her knees and poured like water through the open car door. A man yelled and ran after her. He brought her to Ann, and he was angry. "Please put your dog back in the car, miss," he commanded. "We don't let stray dogs around here."

Ann's rage mounted. "This is not a stray dog," she said coldly. "Where is Mr. Wain?"

"Mr. Wain is in New York."

"Then I'd like to see Mrs. Wain."

"Mrs. Wain is not here."

Ann sensed that he spoke with a certain reserve. "But I've got to see somebody!" she cried. "I'm Miss Riversley."

The man's eyes popped. "Wait!" he cried. "I find out—I call Johnson!"

Johnson appeared, every inch a granite Vermonter. He said: "If you will just wait a minute, miss, I can tell you when Mr. Wain is coming back." He hurried toward the house.

He returned almost immediately. "I just spoke to Mr. Wain on the phone. He's driving up. He says for you please to stay until he gets here; he has to see you."

CHRISTOPHER WAIN drew a complicated doodle on his desk pad while two men facing him droned on with their story. He glanced down and idly opened the manila file-folder that Miss Smith had put on his desk that morning. He had looked at the clippings earlier, but as the men talked on repetitiously, he went over the items again.

A columnist had the lead-off: "WHAT HOLLYWOOD STAR IS PLANNING TO BLITZKRIEG HER MARRIAGE WITH WHAT NEW YORK LAWYER?"

From Hollywood, next: "BERTA HALI'S FAT CONTRACT COMES UP FOR OPTION SOON. THOSE WHO KNOW HAVE IT THAT STUDIO EXECS ARE STUDYING RETURNS FROM HER LATEST FLOPOLA WITH A SOUR-EYE."

A theatrical paper: "BERTA HALI PULLMANS EAST SUNDAY, THE GAG BOYS SAY, FOR A PERSONAL APPEARANCE IN HOBOKEN. P. S. SHE TAKES HER CONTRACT WITH HER."

Smith slipped into the office and put a message before him: *"Johnson at Broadfields on phone."*

"She's here!" Johnson's voice had the quality of an arch-conspirator's. ("There are exactly two things for you to do," his employer had impressed upon him. "Oversee Broadfields, and notify me immediately if a Miss Riversley appears on the scene.")

Christopher rose to his feet. "Gentlemen," he addressed his clients, "perhaps you'd better send me all the correspondence relating to this case. I'll give it several days' careful attention at my place up in the country."

He ushered them to the door and turned into Smith's office adjoining his own. "Clear up everything," he instructed her. "I'm going to Broadfields. I'll let you know when I'll be back."

"Don't forget you're to lunch with Miss Hali. She called twice to remind you."

Christopher wheeled on her. "What the blazes kind of a secretary are you? I told you to get me out of it!"

"I can't achieve the impossible. Miss Hali is in one of her persistent moods." Smith was writing an address on a piece of paper. He glanced at it with a scowl.

"You treat me like a halfwit. I know perfectly well that Mrs. Wain always lunches at Brussard's when she's in New York."

"But you have an inconvenient habit of forgetting the address."

HE stumbled into Brussard's a few minutes later. He always stumbled into Brussard's. He was about to accost a dim dress and hat at the bar that looked like Bertha, when he heard her call from a little table in the corner.

"Darling!" she greeted him in her muted husky voice. "How wonderful! Have a drink?"

"Not if you've had yours." He put his hand on her shoulder. "Let's eat. I'm dashing out of town."

He sat down opposite her and squinted at the strange woman who was both his wife and the figment of glamour that on the release of her first picture had set ten million masculine hearts aflutter. But as other hearts had fluttered, his had quieted.

"Christopher, why can't we begin all over again?" she asked, when they had ordered.

"There are so many reasons," he told her. "All the old reasons we went over when you left for the Coast the last time, and planned to get a divorce."

Bertha crossed her very famous knees beneath the table and straightened her very beautiful and self-confident shoulders. She was a past master at strategy.

"You're looking so well!" she exclaimed. "Different—younger, excited. What's this I hear about a farm in Connecticut?"

Christopher girded himself. This was Bertha in her best form. Suddenly, in the middle of apparently idle chatter, she'd slip the vital question.

"Oh, it's just the kind of set-up I've always wanted," he returned, casually. "Try to imagine the very opposite of the Westchester place."

"Oh?" She turned her head quizzically to one side and studied him. "You know, Chris—my guess would be that a lady has come into your life."

"Oh, bosh!" he retorted.

"Or perhaps," Bertha purred on, "it might be a new dog."

"Right," he conceded with relief.

"What's her name?"

"Ann." It slipped out unconsciously. He could have kicked himself around the block.

"Ann." Bertha repeated it reflectively. "A rather undistinguished name for show purposes. Or aren't you going to show her? Just breeding, perhaps?"

"Both," said Christopher briefly. "And her name's Gretel, in case you'd like to know."

"Oh, I thought you said 'Ann.'" Bertha smiled. "Sorry, my mistake. But Christopher," she digressed, "I don't want to talk about dogs—I want to talk about us, and our marriage."

Christopher knew that strong measures were needed. "Look here; let's get down to facts," he said. "Your last picture seems to be a flop."

"A ghastly picture! A stupid pig of a producer; the writers were babbling idiots; the director was a pompous ass."

But Christopher was ruthless. Now was the time to let her see that he knew what it was all about. "The studio's losing money on the picture and can't see signing a new Hali contract," he continued deliberately. "So Berta Hali turns her back on Hollywood, decides that marriage might not be such a bad way to save her face, and says: 'Christopher, why can't we begin all over again?' "

He waited for the fireworks. Almost anything might happen. But for what did happen, he was utterly unprepared.

"You're right, Chris, every word you say. The picture was awful. I was awful too. They were beastly about the contract, so I am here."

Christopher gasped.

"But I'm glad it all happened that way," she went on softly. "It brought me to my senses. I have been such a silly girl, and if it had not happened, I might never have known what I was losing until it was too late."

There were tears in her voice. Christopher marveled. What a magnificent scene she was putting on!

Her eyes were starry. "Christopher, we will begin from the beginning. I will go up to the castle and you will come to find me there, and to woo again the simple girl, Bertha Haat, that you first loved."

"Bertha, this is like a very bad motion-picture," he objected.

She put one of her long slender fingers across his lips. It was soft and the faint fragrance of some heavy tropical blossom rose to him.

"There isn't anything I wouldn't do for you, darling." Her voice grew throaty. "Which reminds me—what about the Puppy Sweepstakes?"

"Well, what about them?"

"The show has been held at your place for so many years, it would be silly to change all the plans just because you have this new farm."

"It would be a help," he admitted, "what with all the announcements out on it. But it would be an awful bore for you."

"Not a bit. I would love it. I will manage everything for you."

He hesitated; and then he said: "All right, Bertha, go ahead and have a sweepstakes—and thanks a lot. It'll save all the changing about."

As he said good-by to her a few moments later, she reached up, and putting her arms around his neck, kissed him. The hat-check girl gasped.

"Perhaps I shouldn't have done that," she murmured.

"You certainly shouldn't," he said bluntly. "It doesn't make for clear thinking."

AN hour and fifty minutes out of New York, Christopher nosed the Sunbeam into Broadfields. Johnson was at his side as he swung from the car. "She's still here," he announced triumphantly.

"Good. What's she been doing?"

Johnson grinned. "What *aint* she been doing, Mr. Wain! She's been in and out

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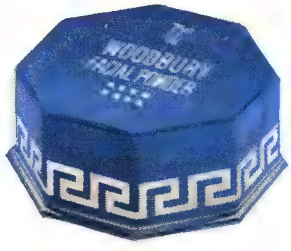

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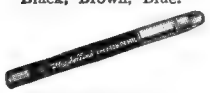

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of everything. . . . Here she comes now with her dog."

Christopher walked across the lawn toward the paddock gate, to meet her halfway. Rowdy raced forward and recognized a friend. She cavorted and barked in joyous welcome, while a frown gathered on Ann's brow.

He held out his hand. "How are you, anyway? I was beginning to despair of ever finding you again."

"That makes us even," she said crisply, "because I've been in despair ever since I arrived."

"Despair about what? Isn't everything all right?"

"It's too all right, which means it's all wrong. That's why I waited. We've got to settle things. But first I have a few apologies to make."

"What have you got to apologize about?"

"I don't like snoopers, and I was a snooper."

He smiled. "That's nothing, some of our best people are snoopers."

"Not the way I snooped. First I pumped your kennel men and Johnson. Then I called up Paul Freubel, and while I was phoning—I used the phone in the library—I looked at the letter paper on your desk. What right have you got to be a lawyer with a Wall Street office? And Tiffany stationery?" She stamped her foot. "Oh, I'm boiling all over again at the way you made a fool of me!"

(She added silently: "And because I snooped into that letter on your desk, and found that your wife is Berta Hali, probably the most gorgeous-looking woman alive, and that she's in New York.")

"Now look here," he protested. "You're not fair. You jumped to your own conclusions, you know."

"But you know perfectly well I thought you were just another edition of Paul Freubel, a poor devil trying to make a living out of raising Great Danes. Otherwise do you think I'd have let you have this place at fifty dollars a month? Why, I've been robbed!"

He burst out laughing, and she blessed him for it, laughing too. And then she pulled herself up sharply. "I'm not joking," she said in a curt voice. "This whole arrangement is most unbusiness-like."

"I know that," he admitted soberly. "What I've spent on the place hardly makes up for the rental I ought to be paying."

"Don't be absurd. What I mean is—you have no lease. I could put you out tomorrow—don't you realize that?"

"I realize it. But do you want to?"

She stamped her foot again. "Of course I do. But in all decency I can't. You practically own the place— Look here," she broke off, "are you listening?"

"No. I was watching Rowdy. Say, that pup's improved!"

"It must hurt you to own up to it." She heard the note of pettiness in her voice, and she didn't like it. She didn't like anything about herself in this entire episode. Her reactions were ignoble, her instincts prying, and her approach devious. Even her physical being rebelled at the unwonted conflict in her soul. Her head was throbbing, and her chest had tightened anew in a spasm of pain. She remembered the strange coldish feeling she had had that morning.

She saw him look at her questioningly. "It's getting raw, and you're not looking well. Let's get indoors," he urged.

She shook her head. "I'm going home. Here, Rowdy!"

"I'll drive you into town."

"You'll do nothing of the sort." She stalked ahead of him. He caught up with her in two long strides. "You're being unreasonable," he chided. "It isn't as if I didn't love the place; it isn't as if I'd desecrated anything—or have I?"

"Oh, how wrong you are—" Gratitude welled up in her, drowning out all ignominy, and making her forget the hurt that twisted into her. "You've done a beautiful job. I'll never be able to thank you for what you've done."

"I thought that something must have hurt you," he said gently. "I wish I knew what it was."

She could think of no answer. She couldn't say, "I'm hurt because you're married and haven't said so." If she told him that, he'd know the rest of it. He'd know she was trying with all her strength to keep from falling in love with him.

She turned away; and suddenly, overwhelmingly, that tightness in her chest swept over her in a hot rush, and her knees buckled.

"You idiot—you precious idiot!" Christopher cried. "You've got a chill, and you're burning with fever!" She felt herself being swooped into his arms, and fought against the strength that held her bound.

"Put me down. Where are you taking me?"

"Never mind where I'm taking you. I'm doing your thinking for you, and I'm making the decisions."

She felt as if she were in a swing making great swoops out into nowhere. A heavy blanket of oblivion seemed to fall over her, and then nothing at all existed.

Christopher telephoned Dr. Mathedon at once. He came, and looked serious, and advised Christopher to get in touch with Mrs. Hewford, Ann's sister.

"I don't know which way this is going to jump," he said.

Christopher traced Mrs. Hewford to the Waldorf. Once reached, Helen exploded right off like a string of Chinese firecrackers, and it took him some time to convince her that their old family physician was taking care of Ann, and that Emma Jeeves was helping, and a nurse was there too.

THE next morning, Helen appeared in person, with Tom Barston in tow. Christopher didn't know to this moment where Mr. Barston figured in the set-up, but he carried all the dull, well-bred stigma of an old family friend.

"Mr. Barston and I hate to inconvenience you in this way," Helen began.

"No inconvenience at all," Christopher returned politely.

"Oh, but it *is* an inconvenience!" Helen's emphasis implied that if it wasn't an inconvenience for him, it was a decided inconvenience for her. "I would have had my sister moved immediately to a hospital, but the doctor insisted that she stay here."

"Of course she stays here," Christopher agreed. "It's her home, after all."

"But surely Mrs. Wain must be inconvenienced?"

"Not at all," he assured her noncommittally.

Helen was stumped. "Nevertheless," she wound up, as she swept toward the guest-room, "you can appreciate how distressing this all is for Mr. Barston. When the doctor comes this morning, I shall have to make him see the good sense of getting Ann back to town at once."

Christopher looked after her, scratching his head. What the devil did she mean—distressing for Mr. Barston?

HE turned to the door of Ann's bedroom and tapped lightly. The nurse slipped out.

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Wain. She's quite a lot better today. Temperature's almost normal."

"That's wonderful. Any chance of my peeking in at her, do you think?"

Miss Drew smiled and opened the door wider. "Just for a moment."

Ann was, Christopher thought, like a child lying there, with her short curly hair spread out over the pillows. "Well, you're looking better," he essayed, as matter-of-factly as he could, "for a person who almost had pneumonia."

"You mean I've looked worse than this?" she demanded.

"Good girl," he commended, silently. She had somehow broken down the wall of unease that exists between the sick and the well.

"How did I get in here that night?" she asked.

"I carried you."

"And how did I get into this?" She gestured about the bed.

"You fell into it." It was one of those succinct, self-contained statements. "Listen—I might as well confess there's someone downstairs who ought to be standing here in my place."

"Helen! You called her! Oh, for goodness' sake!"

"Mr. Barston's here too. By the way, what is he to you, anyway?"

"Well, Helen thinks he's engaged to me, and Tom thinks so too."

"And what do you think?"

"I don't know."

"What the blazes right have you got running around not knowing a thing like that!"

"A lot more right than you have running around the way you are!" she flared out.

"Maybe that's something we ought to talk about," Christopher said.

"It's something I don't want to talk about. I feel too weak to have any more discussion."

He looked contrite. "Gosh, I could kick myself."

"So could I. By the way, how's Rowdy?"

"Rowdy's fine."

"I've decided to show her at your Puppy Sweepstakes. I want her to beat Gretel."

He grinned. "That's white of you."

Miss Drew came bustling in. She took one look at Ann's flushed face and glanced at Christopher reproachfully. "I think we've had a long enough visit," said she in her best bedside manner.

"I think so too," Christopher agreed. He took Ann's hand. "Good luck in the Puppy Sweepstakes!" he said.

Downstairs he found Tom Barston. Tom was apparently in awe of Ann's

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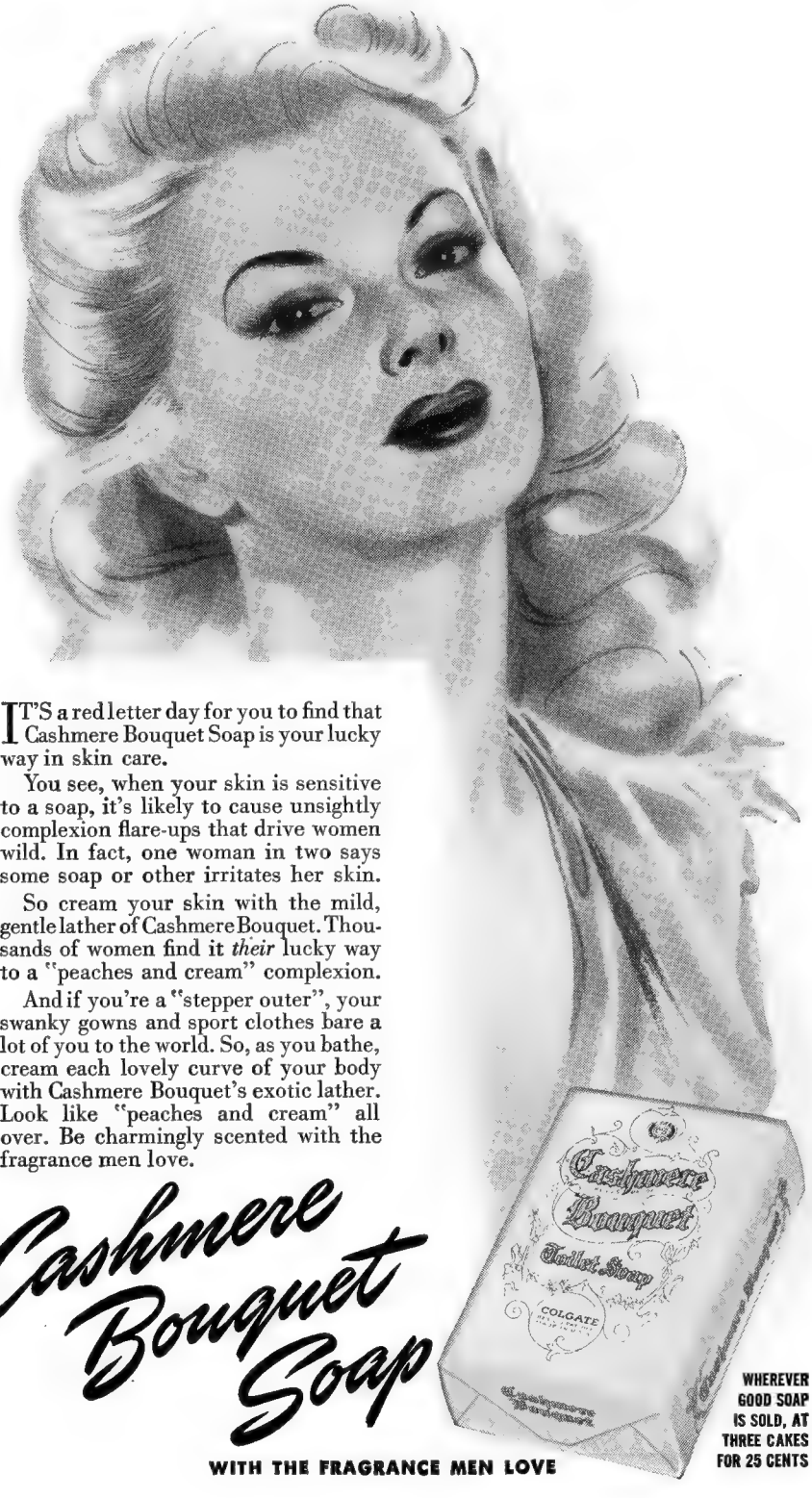

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sister, and was also the kind of person who preferred life to be without sharp edges. "So sorry to have had all this come up," he apologized vaguely. "Ann's coming down sick is just one of those things. Mrs. Hewford could stay on here but I could find digs in the village, I imagine?"

Christopher took the cue. "I wouldn't hear of it," he said. He looked at his watch. "I really must be off, and the place is yours. I hope you'll be comfortable. Mrs. Johnson is at your service." He nodded and left, to give final orders to that effect. He decided that he didn't like Tom Barston.

IN the days that followed, Ann tried to put him out of her mind—tried to keep her thoughts from building images, tried to tell herself she did not love him. For he was married to one of the most beautiful women in the world, with whom he was living, doubtless, all this time.

Helen and Tom had left, after Helen had suggested to the doctor that Ann be moved back to New York—in vain; he had frowned on it. So Ann lay alone with her thoughts, and the days passed, and Christopher did not come.

Then he appeared quite unexpectedly, the evening before the Puppy Sweepstakes. He found her lying on the chaise longue, in a pink negligee that Helen had left behind in a spirit of foresight rather than coöperation. She felt dizzy with his nearness, her hands grew cold.

He grinned in greeting. "Young lady, I think you're looking pretty well."

"Pretty well? I thought I looked beautiful."

"You do. What I should have said was, you look pretty strong."

"I am. I'm going to the Sweepstakes tomorrow."

"Hey—who said so?"

"I said so."

"What's Dr. Mathedon say?"

"I didn't ask him."

"Well, it's out," he said firmly. "You don't have to be there; Rowdy will do very nicely by herself."

"I expect her to do much better than Gretel."

"Sure of yourself, aren't you? Anyway, they're a great pair. I'm taking them over myself tonight, and I'll report to you after the show."

"Thank you." She rang for the nurse. She was afraid that he'd see how much she wanted him to stay. Her pride was slipping away from her. "Here's Miss Drew to put you out," she said as the white starched figure appeared.

Miss Drew seemed surprised. She had had no intention of putting Mr. Wain out.

The following morning Ann professed a great interest in Miss Drew's little niece Susie, who was acting in a school play near New London. "I wouldn't have you miss it, Miss Drew," she said. "I'm perfectly all right to be left alone. Emma Jeeves is here, if I need anything."

Miss Drew hesitated. Susie was the apple of her eye. "Well, now, really—" she murmured, overcome with gratitude. She went about the job of leaving everything so that it would run like clockwork, but the mainspring of that carefully planned clockwork went out of kilter the moment her car left the drive. Ann looked at her watch. She would have none too much time. She sent for Emma Jeeves. "We'll be ready to leave in twenty minutes," she announced.

"Ready to leave for where?" Emma's New England caution evinced itself. "Nurse didn't say anything about it."

"Maybe she didn't, but the doctor did," Ann lied shamelessly. "He said, 'Best thing in the world for you—get out in the car and let Emma Jeeves take you for a nice drive.'"

The truth of it was that she wanted to see with her own eyes this place where Christopher had his other being; she wanted to see the home that Berta Hali had made for him.

"Where do we go?" Emma asked, as she squared herself importantly behind the wheel of Ann's car.

"Oh, just down this road a bit."

As they crossed the Connecticut line, Ann began unostentatiously to direct her.

The house was one of those enormous pseudo-manorial establishments that you read about in the worst books but hardly believe are real.

"A drive is one thing, but you shouldn't be walking around," Emma fretted as Ann stepped out of the car.

"I won't be long," she promised. "You wait here." She started to thread her way toward a huge tented area in gay red and white canvas. A mad din of barking made the signs reading SHOW RING and BENCHING quite superfluous. She approached a long table laden with sandwiches and cakes, and heard a debutante-looking girl with a steward's red badge pinned to her dress say to a rather seedy-looking man with a brace of dogs on a leash: "I don't know whether there are any dishes for dogs to drink from, but Mrs. Wain is coming over now and I'll ask her."

Mrs. Wain! Ann's heart jumped. She turned her head and saw a slim figure running across the lawn. It was Berta Hali, as lovely and alluring as she had ever been on the screen.

"My dear," she called out to her friend in a voice that was like a 'cello, "it's all over! We've won! Christopher was just like an excited boy. It was so thrilling, when the judge finally came over and gave Gretel the ribbon. Gretel is Christopher's new American-bred dog, you know—"

Ann felt for a chair. Rowdy had lost. As in a fog, she heard one of the women say, "Berta darling, why this sudden interest in dogs? It seems very suspicious to me!"—and Berta's low trilling laugh.

ANN felt sick. She got to her feet. She had only one desire—to get as far away as she could. She stumbled out into the open, and a hand caught her arm. A cheerful voice exploded in her ear.

"Well, well, look who's here! The boss said you were sick in bed."

She looked up into Paul Freubel's face.

"Oh, Paul!" she gasped. "I'm so awfully glad to see you. Help me get out of here, please. My legs won't walk properly."

He glanced at her. "Say, you do look kind of bad. You got someone with you to take care of you?"

"Yes," Ann said. "Just help me to my car."

He hurried with her toward the parking-space.

"Now to smooth Emma Jeeves over, and I can call it a day," Ann told herself, trembling with exhaustion. But Emma didn't need any smoothing-over. She was testing out a belated sex appeal with quite a distinguished-looking chauffeur. She drove home with her head in the clouds, oblivious of Ann, who huddled, white and spent, beside her.

BACK at Broadfields, Ann toppled into bed—grateful to be there, grateful to have gotten there before Miss Drew returned. She must have drowsed off into a nap, because when she wakened to the crunch of gravel on the driveway, it was quite dark.

A few minutes later there was a light rap on the door. "Come in!" she called, and Christopher's dim form appeared on the threshold.

"Did I waken you? You look fagged," he said at once. "But I've got the best medicine in the world for you." He whipped a large blue ribbon out of his pocket. "While you lay here sulking all day, look what your dog did!"

"Are you trying to tell me that Rowdy won?"

"The ribbon speaks for itself," he offered with modest duplicity.

"You mean she beat Gretel?"

"Beat her to a frazzle," he insisted manfully.

Ann was determined to make him suffer for it. "Well, I knew she would," she said. "She's the better dog, after all."

Christopher squirmed almost visibly. "At that," he said, "you don't seem very put up by the ribbon."

"Well, frankly, I'm not. I'm out for bigger things."

"Look here," he said, a little desperately, "you've talked enough." He glanced at his watch. "I've got to drive back."

Of course. For a moment she had forgotten that he was in love with Berta.

After he was gone, she lay with her eyes closed, struggling to hold back the tears that burned her lids. Why had he told her that Rowdy won? Because he felt sorry for her? As he would feel sorry for a disappointed child? Rage filled her. Her mind was made up. This must be finished, broken off; it was hopeless every way you looked. Prolonging it was merely useless torment.

Miss Drew was horrified the following morning when Ann announced that she was going back to New York at once, but could not alter her decision; and a few minutes later Ann was making her way across the lawn toward the kennels to pick up Rowdy.

"What's your hurry?"—and Christopher caught up to her.

"Oh, hello, I thought you were at your place."

"Left there around midnight."

"Oh." It went through her mind, "Berta probably gave a party for him." Aloud she said, masked by her usual banter, "Don't you ever work?"

"Only under the most adverse circumstances. No, seriously, I'm waiting for Paul Freubel. He's coming over to take the braces off the puppies' ears. What are you doing up and out at this hour?"

"Oh, I'm leaving," she told him nonchalantly.

He came to a halt. "See here, you don't think you're going back to that stuffy city

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and live on salads or whatever it is women live on when they're alone, do you?"

"Tom'll see that I eat proper dinners," she reminded him.

"To hell with Tom. Why not stay on up here?"

"You appear to forget," she heard herself saying, "that I'm probably going to marry Tom Barston."

"You lie in your teeth. You wouldn't marry Tom Barston if he were the last man on earth." He grinned. "Here comes Paul now."

"Well, you don't look any the worse after yesterday," Paul began jovially, smothering Ann's hand in his warm grasp.

She trod on his foot. At the same moment, Christopher trod on Paul's other foot, and put in quickly, "Why should she, after a win like that?"

Paul looked confused. "Sure, sure," he hastily agreed.

"Paul, listen," Ann suddenly exclaimed. An idea had occurred to her. She hated returning to New York in her still weakened condition; on the other hand she must not permit herself to stay here, near Christopher. "How about taking a couple of boarders for a few weeks? Me and Rowdy?"

Paul's face lit up, while Christopher looked hurt and grim. "Fine!" Paul exclaimed heartily. "We've got a swell cabin for you. I'll drive you back with me today."

Christopher stood looking after them in silence. Ann did not trust herself to speak, even to say good-by.

"I ALMOST busted out laughing," Paul confided with relish as his station-wagon bounced laboriously along. "'If you make a liar out of me,' he says, 'I'll knock your block off. Rowdy won, see?' he says. But no kidding, Ann," he continued more soberly. "Even if Rowdy lost yesterday, she'll be winning one of these days. She's a hundred percent improved."

He was still talking about dogs when they drove up to his Tourist Camps and Kennels. The surroundings were lovelier than Ann had remembered on that stormy night a few short weeks ago; the big maple tree was putting out green leaves, and forsythia bushes in bloom glorified the white cabins behind the big house.

The car rolled to a noisy stop. Mrs. Freubel came out to meet them. "It's Ann, Mom!" Paul told her.

She looked at Ann with that deeper sight than is given to those who can see only with their eyes. "I am glad you're here," she said, and in her welcome was all the punctiliousness of her old-world courtesy. "You have been sick. But you will soon be well again."

"That's your job, Mom," Paul said.

The old woman smiled. "I know," she agreed.

But even she, with that deep insight, thought Ann, did not know how much more there was to be made well again than the body alone. . . .

Helen disapproved of tourist camps, and for a week Ann received daily letters to that effect.

Christopher was no less disapproving. There wasn't any telephone—Paul had sacrificed it for economy—so he resorted instead to a snowstorm of telegrams asking Ann to come over to Broadfields. These she ignored. Then one evening there was a message saying he was coming the next day, like it or not. It caught her unawares. Her resolution to have nothing to do with him went to the place where all good resolutions go. But at noon there was a second wire: *"Frightfully sorry. Flying unexpectedly to Coast. Christopher."*

Then one morning as Ann put the coffeepot on the electric plate, steps sounded on the porch and Rowdy rushed to the threshold. Ann waited for her to bark, but she only wagged her tail. "Oh!" Ann breathed—and suddenly all the lights in the universe blazed up in a galaxy of glory.

"Pleeze, lady," his voice wheedled, "I smella da coffee, you giva me da cup, I feexa da umbrell's."

"Well, where did you drop from, of all people!" she cried with a fine pretense of casualness.

"Flew from the Coast last night."

"What were you doing out there?"

"Oh, a law case, and some other business—"

"Then you do work occasionally."

"Occasionally—when I can't avoid it."

They drank their coffee. She carefully avoided his eyes. "Now if you'll excuse us," she said, "I'll go out for my walk."

"I wouldn't dream of letting you go alone."

One of Rowdy's brothers gave a bark of envy as they passed, and then they were off up the woods road that led back over the hill from the Freubels'.

"Is this your daily good deed—this hike?" Christopher asked.

"Five miles."

"It's done wonders for you. You're looking marvelous—"

THEY walked on in silence until they came to the crest of the hill. Below them a little valley fanned out to blue hills in the distance. Ann took her courage in her hands. She must get this over now, once and forever. It would be like plunging into ice-water, but she gritted her teeth.

"You stopped over in New York?" she asked.

"No. I wanted to see you first. I had to."

"Then you haven't seen Berta Hali—I mean Mrs. Wain?"

He gave her a quick glance.

"Ann, I want to talk to you about that. I wanted to before, but you always seemed to cut me off—"

"You don't have to talk to me about it," she said, recognizing as she spoke the strange female contrariness of her position.

"But damn it, I've got to! That's why I came up here!"

"I don't think I want you to."

He grabbed her by the shoulders. "Be quiet and stop being difficult," he commanded. "We've gone on being foolish long enough. I'm going to tell you about Berta because I'm in love with you—and it's about time you knew it."

He told her the whole story of his marriage, while she listened in utter silence, except for the increasing pace of her heart, which seemed to fill her ears. "So you see," he finished, "her last picture looked like a flop, the studio didn't offer to renew her contract, and so she comes rushing back to me, having decided that

that's the best way out. She doesn't love me, she knows I don't love her—"

Ann drew a long breath. "I'm glad you've told me," she said. "I could never live with myself if I thought I'd come between anything that was really fine and beautiful."

"This was nothing fine and beautiful," he said gravely. "It was an infatuation I felt for Bertha in the first place. And for her I was only a stepping-stone. I see that now."

"But," Ann said slowly, "your seeing it now doesn't settle things. It's still impossible. I'll fight like a tiger for what belongs to me—but you don't belong to me, you belong to her; and she'll never give you up."

"Ann," he said, "all that matters is—do you love me?"

She did not answer at once. His fingers tightened on her shoulders.

She forced herself to speak. "Christopher, I—I can't. I mustn't. Because what we might do about that love—"

He released her, and she saw in amazement that he was grinning broadly. "That's all I wanted to know. Now listen, my precious little New Englander. I knew that if Hollywood beckoned again, Bertha'd drop me. Fame, glamour, center of the stage—that's her real love, first and always. So—well, so I was out on the Coast on law business. I get a wire from my faithful and beloved secretary, Smith. 'Hear that Hali's last picture is picking up at the box-office,' it said. 'Are you interested?' Was I! So I go over to see the big-shot of her studio. 'Is this true?' I asked him. 'Well,' he said, 'as a matter of fact, it is. We were just thinking about offering her another contract.'" He paused, still grinning broadly.

"Well?" Ann said breathlessly. "Well? Go on, you ninny!"

"'But,' the big shot continued, 'unfortunately there's one rather touchy point. You see, Mr. Wain, we feel that her marriage—well, to be quite candid, we don't think it's been very favorable publicity for her. We think she can come back to what she was, but only if all the publicity about her is good—nothing sour, like living apart from her husband, as she has been doing. Of course,' he said, in what I am sure he thought was a very subtle manner, 'if she was single, that would be the best thing of all—'

"And so," Christopher concluded triumphantly, "I took him by the hand and shouted in his ear, 'Offer her a contract with the stipulation that she's divorced—and see what happens!'"

Ann's voice was a squeak. "And what happened?"

"And Berta Hali left the East last night *en route* to Hollywood—but with a short stop of six weeks in Reno first."

SOMEWHERE in the distance Rowdy was barking madly; over the hill a cock was crowing; down in the valley Paul Freubel was ringing the breakfast-bell. Ann heard none of this. For the instant that his lips touched hers it was as if a steam calliope were blaring sweet music in her ears and she were on the edge of a vast merry-go-round that was whirling at a tremendous rate.

She had to hold on to something. The best idea seemed to be to hold on to Christopher. She did.

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NEW Super-Soft Dr Scholl's Zino-pads

WE BAND OF BROTHERS

(Continued from page 15)

did it, and puffed once, twice. The German plane was now directly opposite him, the pilot clearly visible.

Airman probably spoke to airman, somehow, in those two or three seconds, passing over the differences of nationality, party creed, *Weltanschauung*. The German had Bill at his mercy. They looked at each other straight, for one fraction of a second, and Bill puffed his cigarette defiantly. The German saluted him and zoomed off again into the sky, resuming altitude at top speed.

That was peril number one, safely passed. Bill threw his cigarette away and looked down. He was sinking toward the Channel—"the drink," as the aviators call it. Weak and sick as he was, and encumbered by his parachute harness, there was no chance of survival in the water. He was a little dazed now, and had no idea which string to pull to guide (or help guide) the parachute. For what seemed like an eternity, and might have been ten minutes, he sank toward certain death in the water. Then, at a safe distance above the Channel, he fell upon a steady landward breeze which whisked him away toward the English shore. Peril number two—"the drink"—had been safely passed.

But now he was scudding along toward an English town, coming down steadily, and peril number three loomed very large. That was in July, and the country was full of stories about how the angry citizens rushed up to anybody who descended in a parachute: all such were supposed to be Germans. For another ten or fifteen minutes Bill, only half-conscious, suffered acute anxiety. "I got away from the German and the drink," he thought confusedly, "but here's where the English catch me and mistake me for a German." He sank at last, after about half an hour's journey with the parachute, on a roof in the town of Worthing. Sick, wounded and dazed as he was, he dreaded the thought of being attacked by his own people.

They rushed up, of course, many of them, but not to kill him: they brought bandages and first-aid kit, cups of tea and all the rest of it. He was handed down tenderly from the roof, surrounded by friendly voices and figures. And the only real loss he suffered from all his half-hour's adventures was this: every button on his uniform was snipped off for a souvenir.

He recovered from his wounds and went to Buckingham Palace a month or so later to receive his decoration from the King. It would be satisfactory to say that he lived happily ever after; but since he returned to the squadron in September, this may not be true. If he is still with the squadron, he is undoubtedly happy, anyhow: for one of the strangest things about this breed of men is that they do seem to be happy where they are. It has been difficult, in many cases, to make them take their leaves and rest periods on the scheduled times, and they always return to the squadron with great eagerness.

Their poet is no contemporary, but Shakespeare himself, whether they know it or not—the Shakespeare who wrote: *"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."* Remember? *Harry the King* says it, in Henry V, Act IV, Scene 3, and along with other things:

. . . . he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.

There are squadrons in the R.A.F. which have been wholly renewed since last June. Famous throughout the service, for example, is 85 Squadron: it has nobody in it now who was with it in France in May. I think the last to die of the original fighters in that mighty little "band of brothers" was Dicky Lee, who was shot down over Folkestone at the beginning of September. Dicky was the top ace of the R.A.F. when he died. He had had some of the most astounding experiences of the whole incredible summer. Shot down behind the German lines in France, he escaped to his own lines on a German tank: he found 85 again, got a plane, and was shot down again in the Channel along about Dunkirk time. A destroyer came along and fished him out of the Channel; he was taken to London to hospital. He was twenty years old.

ANOTHER celebrated fighter squadron is 601, made up originally of young men who had been amateur flyers before the war. Squadron 601 distinguished itself in Norway and France before it began its epic career of this past summer. Then, when the air battle over England opened in July, 601 was with 85 and another band (I think 152) at Tangmere, a forward airdrome on the Sussex coast. Some day when this war is over somebody will tell the story of Tangmere in full. Owing to its position, it was one of the forward airdromes (like Manston, farther on) which most constantly sent up planes to intercept the waves of German daytime bombers which initiated the air war and tried to drive the R.A.F. from the sky. Every day brought its tale of almost inconceivable heroism, taken for granted. (The story I told, of Bill and his parachute, is a Tangmere story.) In August, when the daytime attacks intensified, all of the forward airdromes were bombed again and again. Tangmere and Manston got it any number of times; the last time I saw Manston, it looked like a total wreck, and yet I believe it is still being used. (It is difficult for any bombing to destroy a runway beyond repair; and the hangars, or some of them, were underground.)

Before the war a concerted effort was made by higher officers in the R.A.F. to get all the principal airdromes put underground — that is, their administration buildings, hangars and mess. The estimate made by the investigating committee was, I believe, higher than Mr. Neville Chamberlain and his economical government thought they could afford. Consequently a wholly unnecessary number of these brave and valuable boys have been killed on the ground. The worst case I know of occurred at a big airdrome in Kent, not far from Maidstone, where the Germans dived over the field

and bombed the mess at tea-time. Of course they were all there, and not many escaped uninjured—a casualty-list of seventy, dead and wounded, was the result.

This recalls another terrible casualty of the present war which the censor—that enemy of the human race—would never permit to be sent out from England. It was the bombing of the Irish Guards in Norway. They were at tea, just like the boys at Maidstone, when the dive-bombers came over and plastered the mess. The colonel and every officer there present was killed—the entire regimental mess was wiped out. This particular accident has happened often enough that we are obliged to think the Germans do it deliberately. If they can find a regimental or R.A.F. mess and bomb it at mealtime, —particularly at tea-time, the meal where most men are likely to be present at once, —they reap a fine harvest of murder.

Thanks to the economy of Mr. Chamberlain's government, most R.A.F. buildings were above-ground during the battle of last summer. This was only another of the almost innumerable shortcomings which had to be made good when Mr. Churchill came to power. In spite of every difficulty of material, labor and money, on which so many urgent demands are made at once; and in spite of the German bombings throughout the winter, an effort has been made and is being made to get many of them underground before the ordeal of next spring begins. . . .

One night at a bomber station in Cambridgeshire I saw the big Wellington bombers take off for Germany and waited for their return just before dawn. They were away about six hours altogether. In a densely black night without moon or stars they came rolling up from their dispersal posts to the flare-path. You could see their green lights glimmering afar off as they started to move; regularly, on signals, they approached from all points of the compass, one by one, to take their places at the beginning of the flare-path. Then, again on signal, one great monster would sweep into the white light and roar down the field to a take-off. Once in the sky, he would circle the field once or twice, giving his recognition signal with the white light (*"A for Andrew,"* or *"B for Benjamin"*—each plane having the signal of one letter) until he was signaled to proceed. Then, straight as a falcon, off to the east, to the sea and the Continent. This was repeated at five-minute intervals until all seventeen had taken to the sky, and we returned to the mess to wait for them.

THEY came back toward dawn, tired, hungry, not very cheerful until the hot, strong tea and the ham and eggs had revived them. Their hair was still plastered down from the sweat of their helmets, and the rear gunners (those who occupy that incredible gun-turret of the British bombers) were stretching cramped legs and arms. They had been much beset by anti-aircraft shells; one of the machines had been almost shaken to bits by them without being hit. It had been a night of poor visibility, and not one of them had been able to find his primary target: they had fallen back upon the secondary targets or had, in one or two cases, brought their bombs all the way

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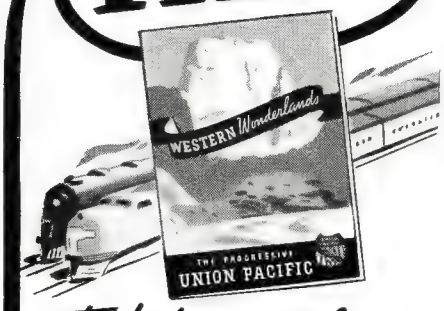

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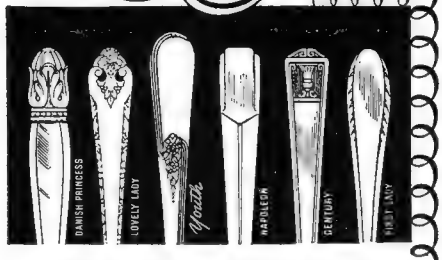

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back again, since they are not permitted the haphazard bombing in which the Germans delight.

These boys were mostly New Zealanders. One of the things I shall remember longest about them is the way they all rushed for the radio when they had finished their ham and eggs. It seems that this hour of the morning (about five or five-thirty) is about the best time to get New Zealand on the air in England. There was considerable fiddling about with the various buttons on the radio in the big lounge at the mess; some horrible squeaks emerged for a moment; then a jazz band began to play a tune. It was "All the Things You Are," an American tune very popular in England this summer. The young New Zealanders listened contentedly, a sort of far-away look in the eyes of one or two of them. It was an ordinary tune, played a hundred times a day: they could have heard it from London or New York just as easily; and yet somehow it brought them the thought of their far-off green island; it came from home.

The bombing stations and the whole bomber command in general have not caught the popular imagination quite so much as the fighter pilots, the knights of the air battle. And yet the bomber's work is in many ways much harder and more dangerous; and in the long run, if the war is to be won, it must be largely by his efforts. The six men who go over to Germany in each Wellington or Blenheim have a long way to go; they are exposed to the fire of the best and most numerous anti-aircraft batteries now in existence; their opportunities to cut a dash, to distinguish themselves individually, are very much less than those of a fighter. They too have had many replacements in this war. (I talked to one South African who was the only survivor of the Wellington squadron which bombed Wilhelmshaven—remember?—in the earliest period of this war, before the Blitzkrieg. He seemed incredibly young, incredibly gay and high-spirited, yet he was the only one left alive out of the hundred-odd gallant youths who had engaged in that daring raid, the first of the war. Some died at Wilhelmshaven; all the rest had gone since.) As they stand around in the lounge, joking and talking, with their glasses of beer and their pipes after dinner, it is hard to realize that in a very short time they will be getting out to the field in harness, ready to take off, and that some of them will not return.

It was a lucky night at that station in Cambridgeshire: they all came back. There was some anxiety about the airplane which had the letter *P*—called *"P for Percy."* We watched them come in for about an hour and a quarter or more, several of them circling the field at once, ordered not to land because there was an air-raid alarm on. *P for Percy* did not return. When all the rest were safely on the ground, and we had repaired to the mess for food, *P for Percy* was still absent. I noticed that his absence, although duly noted, was not excessively mentioned—it was in no way emphasized, and there was no suggestion that perhaps he might not come back. He did not come back for a long time; he had lost his way, I suppose; anyhow, it was about an hour later when we heard his engines roar over the field. There was then a great demand to be informed if it was *P for Percy*, and I realized that all these others had been, like myself, secretly thinking of him all the time.

One of the most celebrated pilots of the R.A.F.'s fighter command once said of these bomber crews something I shall long remember. This pilot is a first-class aviation celebrity, the holder of every decoration he could possibly hold; he has performed dazzling feats of skill and heroism. I was talking to him about his own squadron, the legendary 601. Perhaps, against my best efforts, some hint of the wonder and admiration with which I regard the fighter squadrons penetrated the talk.

"You ought to go and see more of the bomber squadrons," the fighter ace said. His eyes lighted up as he considered the question. "What we do is nothing in comparison: it's all over so quick. Go and see the bombers. Those boys are *tough.*"

CASEY AND ROURKE

(Continued from page 31)

club over your head if you don't be still. Quiet, now. . . . There! How do you like that, Rourke? Straight down the course."

"Not in the hole, though."

"What would you be expecting from this distance? Come on, now. We'll be finding your ball."

"A long ways to the left it went," said Rourke.

"Hurry up! Walk fast."

"Better if we was to run," said Rourke. "More exercise."

"Don't talk nonsense!" said Casey. "Nobody runs, playing golf."

"If I was boss," said Rourke, "the fellow running to the flag first would win."

"You're *not* boss, Rourke. You're trying to learn the game. —Ah! I see what happened to your ball. It's in a trap."

"A trap, Casey! For what? Mice? Muskrat? Bears?"

"Don't be crazy," said Casey. "A sand trap it is, that I'm talking about. Look, Rourke. Your ball's in that big hole."

"A terrible golf-course this is," said Rourke. "Allowing big holes right in the middle of the grass. I wish I was a member of this club."

"Why would you be wishing that, now?"

"So I could resign, Casey."

"Well," said Casey, "the trap is there on purpose. It's to punish you for not driving the ball straight."

"When I get hold of the fellow who put that hole there, I'll break every bone in his body!" said Rourke. "I'm taking no punishment from a perfect stranger!"

"Get down in the trap, and quit grumbling! Hit the ball out onto the grass. Hit it toward the flag."

"They should have a periscope down here," said Rourke. "This blasted hole's so deep, I can hardly see out of it."

"Start swinging, Rourke."

"There's more sand here than Coney Island, Casey. It's getting in my hair and in my shoes and in my eyes. It's worse than a picnic."

"It's a picnic I'm having, watching you. Keep on trying. And don't lose count of your strokes."

"I've enough trouble swinging without counting," said Rourke. "The ball won't go out, Casey. It keeps rolling back in."

"A pity, Rourke! A terrible pity."

"Oh!" said Rourke. "Look! Look up there where your ball is! There's a big bird making ready to grab it! A crow, I think it is."

"What? I see no bird. You're imagining things."

"You looked too late, Casey. The bird flew away. An eagle it might have been."

"Next you'll be telling me it was an ostrich," said Casey. "Now be hitting your ball out of the trap."

"What's the matter with you?" said Rourke. "Have you no eyes? My ball is not in the trap. It's out on the grass—in front of *your* ball."

"I see it, Rourke, but how did it get there?"

"A funny question," said Rourke. "It didn't walk there. The ball has no legs."

"How did it get there, Rourke?"

"I hit it when you were looking for the bird, Casey. How else would it get there?"

"A funny thing I didn't hear you hit it."

"Exactly what I was thinking myself!" said Rourke. "Your ears are not what they used to be. It's quite deaf you're getting. You should see a doctor."

"Doctor, my foot!" said Casey. "My ears are as good as ever—especially when it comes to hearing liars. Rourke, did you throw that ball out of the trap?"

"Would not that be against the rules? Would I want to be breaking the rules, and cheating? Look at the state of the world today, Casey. Too much dishonesty and cheating and—"

"I asked you a simple question," said Casey. "Answer it."

"Did you see me throw the ball, Casey?"

"I did not."

"Well, Casey, I hit the ball out with my club. It was a beautiful shot I made, wasn't it? I stood with my feet so, my club up like this the way you told me, and—"

"Rourke," said Casey, "I take back what I said about you never making a golfer. You're coming along first-rate."

"I think I'm learning one of the most important principles," said Rourke.

U. S.—TODAY

(Continued from page 45)

at the football field. He was on the bench. Ed never made the team—he was too slow; but he was manager. A man was taken out of the game. He looked whipped. Ed got up and put his arm across the boy's shoulder and walked off the field with him, smiling down in that concerned yet comforting way of his. Half an hour later somebody was introducing us, and I was looking up into the kindest and deepest blue eyes I ever saw. (Mine are brown.) In spite of his stoop, I had to look up. That first glimpse I had was a true one; Ed is strong. He's still the nicest person I have ever known. I'm always happier when Ed's in the room; more at peace.

Now I felt something was worrying him; not Dick, he would think it was too bad about Dick's job, of course, but he'd

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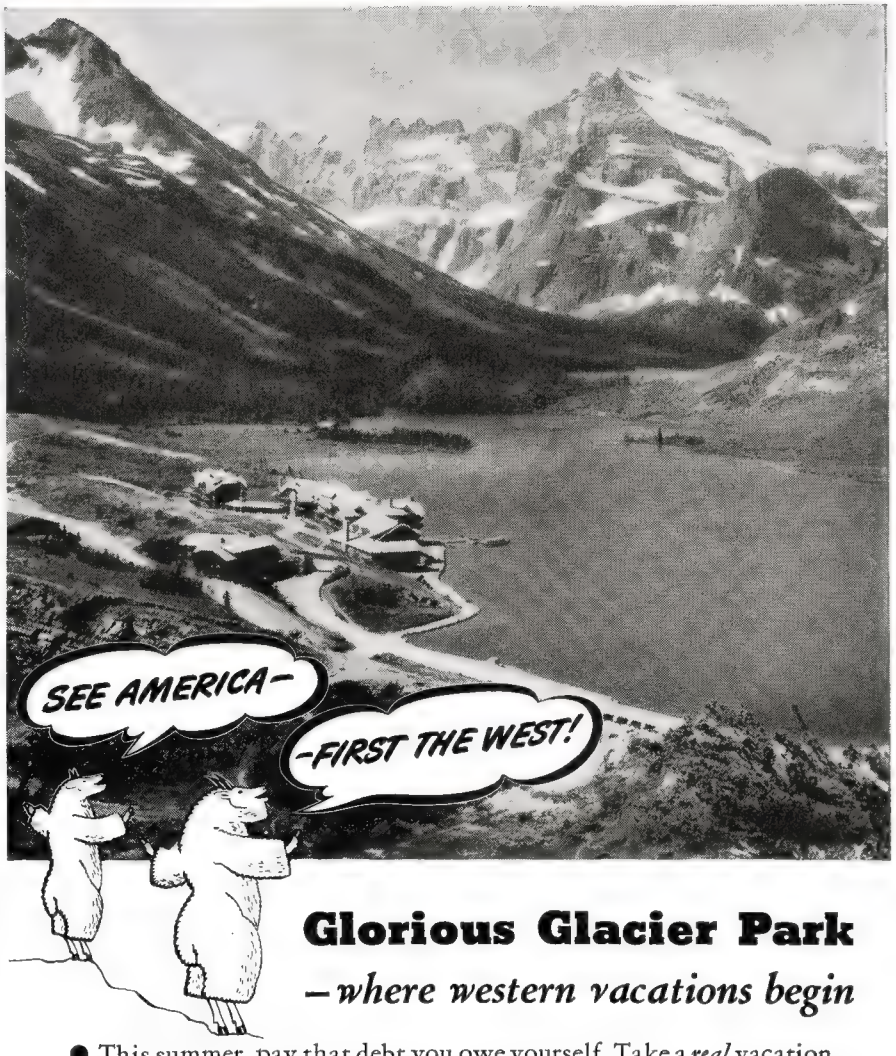

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think going to camp was Dick's duty, and good for the boy too. No, something was wrong at the factory, I felt sure. I went back into the kitchen wishing I knew what it was; wishing, too, as I always do at mealtimes, that Dick was home with the rest of us.

We had supper: steak, baked potatoes, salad and store ice-cream; a tradition on the night I get dinner, from days when steak was the only thing I knew how to cook. Of course nothing important came out; it's years since Ed and I have got a word in edgewise to each other at the table. But Thursday nights Babs and Freddy do the dishes. Ed turns on the radio, and we sit and talk. So it came out at last, what was troubling him.

Ed owns a little factory where they make metal toys, like teddy bears that roll on their backs, and monkeys that jerk their arms and legs. He even designs some of them. He began years ago with only two workmen, but our city has grown from ten to thirty thousand, and the business has grown with it, and there are forty workmen now.

This is the thing: It seems the Government finds that Ed's factory would be good for making shell-fuses, and that is what they want him to do. "I don't know," he said; "I don't like making shells to kill people with. I like the idea that my factory turns out things that will make kids happy. But maybe shell-fuses will defend something we've got over here. Maybe there'll still be a place in the world where children can play when we get through, if we do it right. Eh, Freddy?" he said. He gave Freddy, just sauntering into the room, a gentle poke, then grunted. A return poke from Freddy has an unexpected amount of power behind it.

After that, the children did their homework with their favorite band turned on; they always work to jazz. I went up to see that clean clothes and school-books were laid down ready for the morning rush. The phone rang. I heard Ed say: "Yes, right here, speaking." I ran down. "Yes, son," he said. "We saw it. Too bad about the job, of course. Here's your mother."

After Dick's voice withdrew many miles into the night, I went out to open the garage doors while Ed backed the car in. As we walked toward the house, the mail-plane went by overhead, its green and red lights receding fast into the sky. The stars remained. By the open window the radio, left on, was repeating the drawing of the draft-numbers again—"6887, 4220, 8395—" Ed put his hand on my shoulder and lifted his own a bit; a gesture I know so well. "Looks as if we have a job to do," he said. "That boy of ours, and my little business." He opened the door.

(This journal of an American family will continue in our next issue.)

TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND

(Continued from page 23)

stand, Henry. We know it's not your fault."

His father said helplessly: "Honestly, Janet, I swear he didn't mean to insult you. It must have been—you know."

"I am going to keep it," said Mrs. Creighford in a hard voice. "Nobody's going to get the satisfaction of knowing I sent it back."

"Give it to me," said Henry miserably. "Please give it to me." He thought he was going to cry; and so, apparently, did Honoré, for she grabbed the box from Mrs. Creighford and said primly: "Excuse me, please, but maybe Henry'd better have his skunk's tail back again." She looked pleadingly at her father. "Please, Daddy?"

"All right, all right," said her father helplessly. "My God!"

The children went back through the crowded room to find Johnny Creighford. The noise of voices and clink of glasses was exciting, but Henry was thoughtful. He said: "She is too sophisticated." He was not sure what that meant, but it was a remark he had overheard. And Honoré replied: "But she smells wonderful."

Johnny looked pale and rather sweaty when they found him. He said: "Gosh, I thought you'd never get here."

Henry laid his box on the table and announced: "I'm thirsty." He glanced up and down the table. "What's in those glasses? Lemonade?"

"Champagne," said Johnny shortly. "It'll make you drunk."

Henry reached for a glass and gulped, thirstily. "It will not," he said. "It tastes like ginger-ale." He picked up another glass and drank noisily. "I feel better," he announced.

Honoré was shocked.

"I'll tell Daddy," she warned.

Henry quickly drained another glassful. He set it down with a bang. "Go ahead. Tell him."

Honoré tossed her head and said sweetly to Johnny: "Want to know what's in that box? A skunk's tail. Can you imagine? Henry was going to give it to your mother."

Johnny said gloomily: "She already has two silver foxes."

"Foxen," corrected Henry, and giggled inordinately.

Honoré said sedately: "Henry, somebody has already drank out of that glass —it has lipstick on it."

"Well," said Henry, "my gosh—where's another full one, then? I'm still even thirstier." He tilted his head and let the sweet liquor slide down his throat. "Skoal!" he said happily. "And double skoal."

Honoré kicked his leg, hard. Henry said smugly: "I didn't even feel it."

Honoré smoothed her dress anxiously. "I have a new dress on," she mourned. "But I didn't get to see the wedding."

"You look nice, Honorey," Henry complimented warmly. "You really do." He began to wag his head from side to side. "But children should keep out of older people's way," he announced portentously. He leaned back, resting his elbows on the table, and crossed his feet in front of him. He gazed at the room with mellow composure. "When grown-ups do the things that grown-ups do," he confided, "they don't want children around."

"*Sh-h-h,*" cautioned Honoré. "Somebody might hear you."

"They don't listen to children," he said. "They're making too much noise, anyhow."

THE room clouded a little before his gaze. Over toward the door there was a small commotion, and Mrs. Creighford's high sweet voice floated above the hubbub: "It's only a corsage; but catch it, somebody, for luck."

She held the orchids high above her head; Henry saw her, and his recently acquired daring urged him forward. The ashes of his love for Mrs. Creighford burst into a final and glorious flame, and for a brief instant he surmounted all obstacles. He plunged across the room, and the figures in his path fell to one side to make way. The orchids were in the air as he leaped against someone in a flying tackle, but they were in his perspiring grasp when he picked himself up from the floor. Far away he heard Honoré's shriek: "Oh—Henry knocked down that lady who was going to catch the flowers!" Henry gazed down: at his feet sat a lady, looking at him with injured surprise. "*I* was supposed to catch them, little boy," she said.

Mrs. Creighford had her hand on his shoulder. "Boys don't catch the bride's bouquet, Henry," she said. "You must give it back to the lady."

Henry held the bouquet tightly. "I'm going to keep it," he said doggedly; things seemed momentarily confused.

"Give it back, Henry," said his father in a low and menacing voice. "Help the lady up, first."

Henry proffered a hot limp hand. From across the room Honoré shrilled: "Oh, Henry, you dope! Hurry *yup!*"

Henry saw his father and Mrs. Creighford standing there staring down at him. His father had his arm around Mrs. Creighford; Henry looked into Mrs. Creighford's beautiful face, and he suddenly wanted to cry because she was prettier than his mother. He held the flowers out stiffly. "Here," he said quietly. "Take them. I didn't want them, anyway."

He walked away with dignity; and to Honoré he said urgently: "Come on—let's get out of here. Good-by, Johnny —see you later."

Honoré scolded him all the way down the stairs and into the lobby, but Henry was oblivious; he was conscious only of a peculiar feeling of relief. He was also very sleepy, suddenly. He sat down in a chair and stared at the marble floor; now and then he sighed deeply. Honoré was so struck by his ashen and thoughtful mien that she inquired solicitously, "Shall I get your coat, Henry?"

"I'm asleep," said Henry. "I'm thinking." As if struck by a thought, he staggered to his feet. "My box," he muttered. "Got to get my box."

Honoré said timidly: "I brought it, Henry. I thought maybe you might want it."

Henry said, "Thank you," thickly. . . .

When Granny came into the lobby, Honoré was crying. "Oh, Granny," she said in a hushed voice, "something's the matter with Henry. He drank champagne, and then he knocked a lady down

trying to get some flowers, and now he says he's asleep, only his eyes are wide open."

Granny clucked and hastened forward. "Here's his coat," said Honoré tearfully. "I got it for him."

Henry was gazing moodily at the floor, mumbling to himself. "Flowers," he said. "Flowers for Mummy!"

"Eh?" said Granny. "Get up, Henry. We're going home."

He stood up and gave her a brilliant smile. "Hello, Granny. I want to buy some flowers for Mummy. I kept saying it so I wouldn't forget it. I had some, but they took 'em away. Where's my box, Honorey?"

He suffered himself to be put into his coat, smiling tenderly upon them as they helped him. "We had a lousy time," he murmured. "Perfectly lousy."

"There's a flower-shop next door," said Granny, looking at him sharply. "Are you sure you feel all right, Henry?"

He opened his eyes wide and blinked at her, owlishly. "Why, of course I do, Granny. I am going to keep my skunk's tail, after all. It's very simple." He added vaguely, "Daddy gave us each five dollars."

In the flower-shop Henry waved his hands in a lordly way. "Roses," he said. "Five dollars' worth of roses. For my mother," he added politely.

Honoré sniffed. "*I'm* going to *save* my five dollars," she said virtuously. "Daddy says saving your money is the best thing." She peered into the case. "Whyn't you buy carnations, Henry? They're cheaper."

"Shut up," said Henry. "I'm falling asleep again." Granny was smiling at him, and he smiled back. He would explain everything in the morning!

In the warmth of the taxicab Henry leaned against Granny, holding the florist's box tightly under his arm. Granny pulled him closer as they listened to Honoré's excited chatter. Henry sat up. "My suitcase," he remembered. "I must unpack my suitcase when I get home."

"Ah, yes," murmured Granny. "I already did that for you."

"Thank you, Granny," sighed Henry, and was instantly asleep.

THEY CALLED HIM WILLI—

(Continued from page 35)

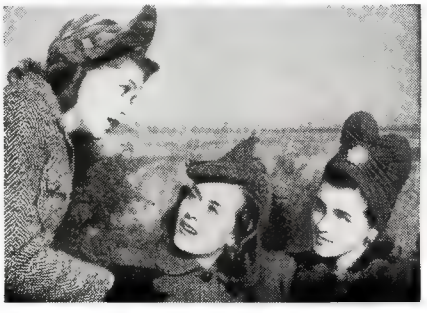
That night, before taking off, Hermann ran down to the tool-shed. All day he had left the door open so that the place should not be overheated. The evening was chill. He renewed the oil in the stove, picked up Willi and stroked his nose for a moment, then carefully shut the door. He did not go in at once to put on his flying-clothes. He walked on the lawn in the shadow of the chestnut trees, with the clear expanse over at the left washed in the moonshine: it was like a lake of milk. Now and then a leaf fell silently, like a life, released easily from earth, spinning into the soft radiance of eternity. Hermann was uplifted. London! London at last! He had thought London would never come his way. And it had come. Standing in the shadow, gazing out into the moon-washed vapors, his hand closed as if round a cup. London had been delivered to him at last!

"They said I shouldn't have adopted the baby!"

A new mother teaches an older one a lesson in modern child care

1. The girls didn't realize that I was on the bench behind them, or they wouldn't have been talking about me. I didn't interrupt them because I was naturally curious to hear what they'd say.

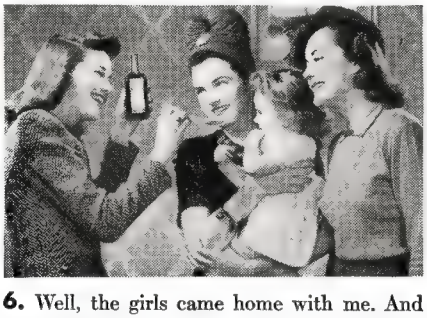
2. "She should never have adopted that baby! She's spoiling it terribly," Jane was saying. "Why, I was there the other day and, my dear, I wish you could see the things she has for that child! She's raising her like an orchid!"



3. "Special diapers, foods, soap, and I'll be darned if she didn't even have a special *laxative!" That* was my cue! "Jane Thompson," I cried, "how can you say I'm spoiling my baby when I'm following the doctor's orders!"

4. "The doctor says you can't treat a baby's delicate system like an adult's. A baby *needs* things designed especially for her. You give her special foods, so of course she should get a special laxative. The doctor recommended Fletcher's Castoria."

5. "He said Fletcher's Castoria is made especially and *only* for infants and children. There isn't a single harsh adult drug in it. It's effective but mild. And *safe*. It works mostly in the lower bowel, so it isn't likely to gripe a child's tiny system."



6. Well, the girls came home with me. And when they saw how the baby loves the *taste* of Fletcher's Castoria, that clinched it! Jane said if it was *that* easy, she was certainly going to get a bottle of Fletcher's Castoria on the way home, and try it for *her* children!

HERE IS THE MEDICAL BACKGROUND

Chief ingredient of Fletcher's Castoria is senna.

Medical literature says: **(1)** In most cases, senna does not disturb the appetite and digestion or cause nausea . . . **(2)** Senna works primarily in the lower bowel . . . **(3)** In regulated dosages, it produces easy elimination and has little tendency to cause irritation or constipation after use.

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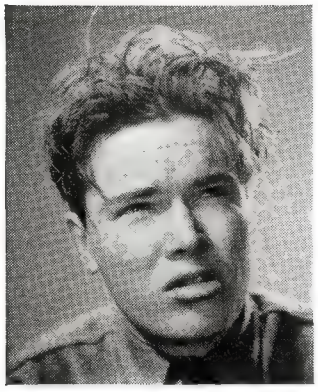
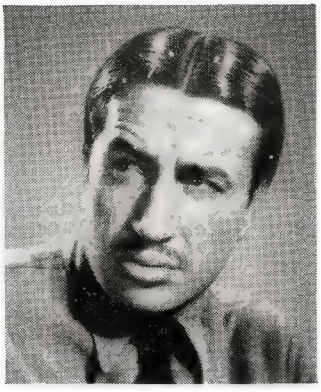
The SAFE laxative for children

Darling: Please wait for me — Your loving Draftee

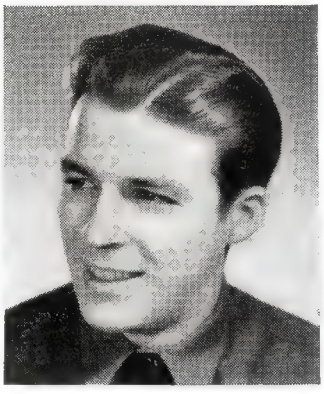


Look at this photo of Bill. That wild hair! Same old story, he uses water to comb it and water washes away natural oils. Pity he didn't use Kreml before having a picture taken intended to keep me interested.



Every time I look at Craig's picture, I wonder whether the boys in camp will kid him out of that greasy goo that plasters down his hair like a gigolo's. Maybe he'll get wise to Kreml, but I'm afraid I can't wait.

Poor Bob. He was always sensitive about going bald so young. Maybe because he looks so much older than he is, he'll be a major sooner. But not my major. Too bad—it's too late for Kreml or anything else.



Nature blessed Jerry with a fine head of hair and Kreml keeps it looking its natural best. No question mark could lurk in the heart of a girl with a photo like this for company. I'll answer Jerry's letter tonight.

Don't soak your hair with water to comb it. Don't plaster it down with greasy, sticky goos. Use Kreml, the famous tonic-dressing that keeps hair looking its natural best.

Kreml also removes ugly dandruff scales, stops excessive falling hair, relieves itching scalp.

Women tell us Kreml puts hair in splendid condition for permanents—makes permanents look lovelier.

Kreml Shampoo is a splendid ally of Kreml Hair Tonic. Made from an 80% olive oil base, it cleanses thoroughly, rinses out quickly, leaves hair soft and easy to manage.

KREML

REMOVES DANDRUFF SCALES

CHECKS EXCESSIVE FALLING HAIR

NOT GREASY — MAKES THE HAIR BEHAVE

He knew it. He had walked through its streets. He knew the spires pricking up whitely into the sky, and the sudden hush of ancient courts where great trees grew out of the pavements on a second's swift turn from the humming thoroughfares where the buses roared and the taxi-brakes squealed and the dray-horses went by like beasts survived from one age into another. He knew the broad majesty of the Embankment, with the timeless river sliding by, and the towers of Westminster standing up with their heads among the dusky stars. He knew the feverish pulsation of light over the West End sky at night as the crowds surged and swayed: restaurant, theater, dance-hall, club; and over everything the never-ending *bourdon* of the great city's life beating up and up into the face of the invisible heavens.

All this he knew; and standing there, tranced in the tranced moonlight, he saw it again, told it over piece by piece, and felt the hot surge flow once more to his brain as it had flowed whenever, high over a city in the night, he had realized, with joy and terror, that never, never, could there be anything else like this power that lay within the touch of his puny hand. But not before had it been like this.

London! Millions—millions—millions! Willi was forgotten. He rushed through the moonlight into the house. The invisible heavens! His pathway!

Hans and Friedrich were at the airdrome.

"Good hunting, Hermann!" they said.

The immense Dornier roared and shivered, shivered and rose, climbed, turned, disappeared into the moon-glister of the sky.

"Hermann looks all lit up tonight," said Hans.

"He always does," Friedrich answered. "He likes it."

"That's as well," Hans said tersely.

NOW there was nothing to do but fly home, and he knew what that meant. The spring in him, that had been so taut, was broken. It was always the same; even tonight it was the same. Even after London, even after the joy of seeing the great fires break out, of knowing that buildings full of men and women and children had been smashed as though they were anthills by this power that he wielded like Jehovah hurling thunderbolts! His machine rocked in the wind of exploding shells aimed from that world down there trying so vainly to hide in a mantle of darkness —rocked like a boat in a choppy sea, roared out into smooth water, swept almost vertically up a cliff of air—out of danger, away from tumult, into the invisible heavens, his pathway home.

The spring was broken. Oh, God! To be in bed and asleep! That was all he asked for on the way home. He was always dull as an owl, witless as a clod, whenever he had to report on his night's doings; and so he was now, standing there swathed in his flying-clothes, with his helmet under his arm, his hair unruly and damp with sweat.

As he went blundering toward the chateau, he thought of Willi. Fatigue fell from him, and he smiled. Willi was alive! He had saved Willi's life! Tomorrow—no, this very day!—he and Willi would begin to be friends. He looked across the lawn toward the tool-shed, sniffed the air, and stopped. There was a smell of slow burning, and from the tool-shed corner a penciling of smoke was drawn vaguely upon the air. Filled with swift apprehension, Hermann ran across the lawn, to find, where the shed had been, a heap of charred rubbish. . . .

Hans, Friedrich and Julius were asleep when he burst noisily into the dormitory. "Hans!" he shouted. "Hans! Friedrich! What happened? Did you get Willi out?"

Hans sat up and rubbed his eyes. "Oh! Hallo, Hermann. Good hunting?"

"Willi!" Hermann cried. "What happened?"

"Oh—that! The damned English have been over. They didn't do much. But one incendiary fell on the tool-shed."

"He was burned to death!" Hermann screamed, white and hysterical.

"Come on, now, come to bed," said Friedrich. "We couldn't do a thing. That oil you took in helped."

Hermann began to blubber like a child. "You don't understand," he said. "I saved his life! Life! Life!"

"Well, for heaven's sake," said Julius, sitting up angrily. "What in hell is all this about a hedgehog? I wouldn't have raised a hand, even if I could."

"No!" Hermann cried. "You—you wouldn't! You've got no love, no pity."

He rushed across the room and began to hammer at Julius' face. Julius warded him off playfully. "Hi! One of you chuck some cold water over him," he said. "He's overwrought."

THE CASE OF THE JET BLACK SHEEP

(Continued from page 44)

artificial than he had ever noticed it to be, and she said: "Sit down, Doctor."

"Thank you. I've just left Ernest looking speculatively at the dahlias. Do you suppose they'll supplant the dancing as the newest life's work?"

"Possibly. Although I'm afraid they're not instantaneous enough."

"Results must spring full-blown?"

"Yes, Doctor."

"You're twenty years old, Mrs. Tuffman. I'm forty-three. That gives me the edge on you, not only as a physician, for I can exert the paternal touch. I do it rather well."

"I'm sure you do."

Starr could feel her hardening against him swiftly, and hostility again setting in beneath her pleasant outer manner.

"There is this about life, Mrs. Tuffman: We so frequently defeat our own ends by the very methods which we use to attain them. You cannot be a constant mirror, and remain yourself. And men tire rapidly of their own reflections."

"Echoes at last become hollow?"

"Yes. We're putting it in fancy language, but I know that you know what I mean. I'd like to be frank. I am your physician. I want to help you."

Bertha's voice grew older:

"It is true that I have tried to be all things to Ernest, in the way that he is all things to himself. There are some things you cannot cage. Birds and wild beasts, yes, if you wish. Bars will hold them. But not Ernest. He's the wind. You've got to ride with the wind, Doctor." She reached her hand out suddenly, and he was surprised at its strength as she closed it over his. "Ride for as long as, and wherever, it may blow. I've no longer any foothold on the ground. From the moment when Ernest asked me to be his wife, I've had none. I want none, Doctor. Believe that, please—I want none."

STARR found himself up against as complete frustration here, as earlier in his office. The ripe old wisdom of Madam Tuffman recurred to him, and he thought how clearly she had cut to the matter's root when she had remarked that Bertha's love for Ernest had surpassed all affectionate or mere biological bounds, and that it was swamped in devotional seas of the more notably classical sorts.

He could understand this very well, under a fabled twist of a mouse being courted and wedded by a handsome lion: a state of affairs that was bound to upset not only the mouse's head but her entire emotional fabric too. She would try every song in her meager repertory to make last, for a little longer, that strange initial enchantment, while living in the most desperate sort of fear that her melodies would be recognized in their true catagories as mouselike squeaks.

He said absently: "It is not always good to love so much."

"I don't care."

"I know you don't. You can't help it."

"I'll never try to hold him."

"You have a good deal of wisdom, Mrs. Tuffman."

"And you have a lot of understanding, Doctor. I couldn't be more commonplace, for anyone like Ernest, and still he chose me. He chose me literally, Doctor, from all the world." She thought over this broodingly for a moment, and then she said: "I suppose the Islands helped."

"The general setting? Romance? No, I think he must have known plenty of that. I imagine he's pretty well dulled to pale moons and the scents of strange flowers."

She said fiercely: "Sometimes I lie in that travesty and wonder."

"Travesty?"

"Our room. Its walls mock me. Every vivid painted leaf on them seems to cry out: 'But for me, but for me, you never would have got him.' There *are* such things as obsessions, Doctor?"

"Plenty of them. They're easily got rid of."

"I've torn at it. Torn at that wallpaper with my fingernails—and then found myself doing it, and stopped doing it!"

He said to her earnestly: "Will you grant me permission to give you a more complete examination than I did today? I sha'n't suggest hospitalization again. Just in my office."

Bertha's voice, after a frightened second, was explosive in its sharpness: "*No.*"

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ANSWER THE 'PHONE!
And then—UPSET STOMACH!
Never upset an upset stomach! Quiet and soothe it with pleasant PEPTO-BISMOL. Not an antacid... not a laxative... PEPTO-BISMOL quickly helps relieve your stomach distress and aids in retarding intestinal fermentation, gas formation and in relieving simple diarrhea.
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HOW CAN I BE OLD-FASHIONED ***when I'm only nineteen months old?***

Why, just look at you, Jeanie — always putting on your hat and running out on errands!

Isn't that what Mummie does?

Heavens, no! Your Mummie does errands the *modern* way, by telephone! Off to the grocer's, over to say good-morning to Granny, a message to see if the young Andrews will be home tonight, a call to the dry cleaner's and a talk with the store about the towels on sale. Mother is through in half an hour, with her morning still ahead, and she hasn't tired herself with a step!

Mercy me, how wonderful! But I expect you cost lots of money —

Me, expensive? I should say not! Mother says I actually save her money — I cost so little!

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

It was impossible to efface her from his thoughts. Starr drove more slowly, then more slowly still. He felt compelled to return to her and have it out. To use force, if need be, if there were no end in persuasion. He turned the car back toward the Bucklands'. He saw the roadster leaving their entrance gates as he neared them. He recognized Bertha in the driving-seat, alone.

She did not go in the direction of the Tuffman estate, but headed north along the highway with a speed which Starr clocked as seventy. Seven miles out of town, she forked toward the right onto a country road which led to the river. Starr decreased his distance and forked too. A half-mile of abominable ruts through a copse of white oak opened suddenly on a clearing, at the farther edge of which a dilapidated inn sat on weary haunches by the river-bank. Bertha's roadster was parked near the door.

Starr was dimly aware of having heard of the place: a late-at-night rendezvous of somewhat indifferent character. He thought that someone had once told him that you could go there and they didn't bother you, about names, about who was with you, about anything at all like that. Also (it was coming back) a small public dining-room was rarely used. More intimate rooms-for-two were, among other things, a solace for the inn's general inaccessibility and rutted approach.

It was intensely quiet; and curtained windows stared across the clearing at Starr blankly. The rendezvous (if it were a rendezvous) was the last thing in the world which he had expected. Still, there was no other car, and Bertha had been alone. More than anything else, this circumstance added a note to the case which absorbed him, and frightened him too. From the speed with which Bertha had driven here, Starr expected another car momentarily, with that other member without whom no rendezvous can be complete.

FIFTEEN minutes passed, but no other car came. The hush continued with only the faint sound of the river and the whispered stirring of restless insects. Starr crossed the clearing on foot and opened the inn's front door. An empty foyer of the dreariest nature faced him, with shut doors to right and left, and a steep narrow stairway leading to the floor above. He opened doors, and found an empty dining-room, and a taproom where a moth-eaten deer's head above the bar alone suggested life.

He went up the narrow stairs. Doors lined either side of a hall, all closed but the farthest on the left, which stood ajar. He walked to it quietly and looked in.

Bertha, seated at a table, was eating steak. Almost with the ferocity of a starving animal, she was lifting it from the plate to her mouth: large pieces of the red meat. No bread, no vegetables, nothing else at all on the table, with the exception of a pitcher of rich milk.

Starr's throat constricted harshly as he watched her, and as he thought: "She's stuffing herself, alone in this dismal place, believing herself loveless, loving so much, in the face of a death at the hands of the one whom she loves, or of his mother— far from home, savoring nothing, just filling her stomach up in order to be with him for a little longer, forcing herself to make this futile gesture to stem the lethal sureness of that inner tide."

Starr stood it for a moment, that wolf-like, desperately urgent quality in the way she ate, then he entered the room.

"All this is ended, Mrs. Tuffman."

Her reaction was instinctive, clouded by the depths into which she had fallen.

"I must get back before he misses me."

"Mrs. Tuffman! We are going back together. Ernest will come with us. We are going back to the house."

Bertha saw him now, and said fiercely: "Why do you persecute me? Why won't you leave me alone?"

"Come with me, please."

Bertha stood up, and her frailness seemed to stiffen into steel, strengthening her into a replica in miniature of the magnificent animal who had married her.

"Doctor Starr, if you say anything about having found me here, I shall call you a liar."

"You are making this very difficult."

"You know the character of this place, Doctor. If you voice your conclusions to anyone—*anyone*—I shall say I have never been here. I shall say you lie."

Starr went to her and placed his hands upon her shoulders, feeling their stiffness, the faint shivering trembles that ran through them.

"You have fought enough. Your rendezvous here was with food. Steak is no antidote for poison, Mrs. Tuffman."

The word was out. Stark between them. Stripped of further conjecture or evasions.

Bertha's strength had a bubble quality about its swift collapse, and she was limp. Starr could scarcely hear her as she said: "Doctor—what shall I do—"

He still held her, warming her coldness, her sudden utter indifference to anything longer left in living. A cough was coughed discreetly behind them in the doorway; and a voice, surprisingly soft when you realized the hulk that it came from, said: "Excuse *me*, lady. Just consider 'at I di'n't come." The waiter, like a gentle gorilla, closed the door.

Starr smiled down at her and said: "I can promise you again, Mrs. Tuffman, that all this is ended. We must return at once to the house. There is a certain thing which I must know."

Bertha refused to smile back.

"No matter which one it is, no matter if it's Ernest's mother, Doctor, I don't want to live."

"That decision is no longer in your hands."

HE refused to let Bertha drive alone; he left his car parked at the inn and got into her roadster, taking the wheel. He wanted to say to Bertha definitely, to say it now: "Here is what I think. Here is this damnable thought that has always been in the back of my mind, and which has just crystallized into a possible fact. Let me tell you of a waiting murderer, who slept, and who waited for your coming to wake up." But he dared not—not until he was sure. For always, in the back of his head, was Madam Tuffman's dictum: "You never could tell about Ernest."

There remained, because of this dictum, a grimness to Starr's thoughts, and he drove in silence to the Bucklands', where Nina Buckland told him that Ernest had left. With one of the (dancing) blondes. Nina's friendly eyes showed plainly that she thought it a trifle queer: Bertha's solitary departure, Ernest's not so solitary departure, then Bertha's return with Starr. But she smiled socially, and swam back among her guests and dahlias. . . .

They found Ernest waiting with Madam Tuffman in the full nightmare of her parlor. Early dinner guests were imminent, and Madam Tuffman was in wine velvet, complete with bosom and train, while a broad diamond choker concealed the valleys of her throat. She rose and held out a hand accented with a magnificent solitaire.

"So good of you to bring her back, Doctor." Her lively dark eyes turned upon Bertha. "We were worried dear."

Ernest said heavily: "Better dress, Bertha. You knew we were dining early."

Bertha looked at Starr, and he said: "Yes, do. I have some things to discuss with Ernest and his mother." He watched her leave the room; then he said to Madam Tuffman: "May I use the telephone, please?"

"Certainly, Doctor."

He left them in their curious silence and went into the hall. He called his office. He said to his secretary, Miss Wadsworth, that if she didn't mind, he would like to return to the Middle Ages, or at least to some points somewhat back. Would she gather some hydrogen sulphide T.S., some litmus—yes, litmus—and the small charcoal grill that was used for steak? Would she embark at once with them in a taxi and hurry to the Tuffmans'? He wanted to make an immediate if primeval test, without the use of tubes and retorts. For what? For a mixture of arsenite and acetate of copper. . . . Yes.

He rejoined Madam Tuffman and her son in the parlor, and they sat on satin and gilt beneath the unshaded bulbs of a vast ormulu chandelier. He said without preamble: "Mr. Tuffman, your wife is suffering from chronic poisoning. I believe its nature to be arsenite and acetate of copper. Her condition is serious, but not necessarily fatal. We are in time."

For a moment Ernest looked stunned, and then he said savagely: "Are you suggesting an attempt at murder, Doctor? The murder of my wife?"

"Yes, Mr. Tuffman. That's right."

MADAM TUFFMAN broke suddenly: "I have known it all along! It has been my horror—all of these months. But I would not believe it. Even against my common sense, I kept telling myself it could not be true. There are but the three of us—my son, and Bertha, and me. I would say again and again that Bertha would not take her own life, because by doing so she would also be taking the life of her child. I knew it was no doing of mine. I would not, I do not, believe that it is Ernest. Doctor, the murderer cannot be here."

"The murderer is here, Mrs. Tuffman."

"Mother—"

"No, Ernest, you must let me finish. For the past year this has been on my

Evening in Paris
–for Evenings of Romance
You're in tune with love—a joyous harmony of fragrance and youthful color! Your Evening in Paris lipstick, rouge, and powder blend with each other and with your skin, in a thrilling "live" shade. And all are fragrant with your perfume—romantic Evening in Paris! You and Cupid and Evening in Paris—that's an alliance no man can resist. You'll see!
CREATED BY BOURJOIS NEW YORK
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heart like a stone. I love you, but I do not know you. Bertha loves you, but she does not know you. Whatever I have gone through, she has gone through more. She is young. I am too old to know about her sort of love any longer—the infinite variety of its sacrifices. I understand none other than my feeling for you, Ernest."

"Mother—"

"Wait, Ernest. Bertha has kept silent. She has suffered this poison to bring her slowly closer to death with every day. She has refused to be examined by Doctor Starr, in dread that the finger would be pointed to you, whom she loves; or to me, whom you love. She has been prepared to face death all of these terrible months, Ernest, if you wanted it that way. You say that the murderer is here, Doctor—"

"That's a damned lie!" Ernest blazed with rage. "I love her. I love her more than anything."

Starr said quietly: "I must ask your patience until Miss Wadsworth gets here. She is bringing certain things."

Minutes passed, while Starr, with oblique pointers, prepared Madam Tuffman and her son with documented precedents for his belief. Bertha's case, he said, was not unique, although today it was so rare as to offer no other existent probable parallel. He touched first upon the idiosyncrasy of certain people to certain poisons, their allergy to them: many men could stand a medicinal dose of a given poison which would prove dangerous if not fatal to anyone who was allergic to it.

In Bertha's case, Starr believed the idiosyncrasy to be strong. The mixture of arsenite and acetate of copper had, if his thoughts were correct, been administered to her in the form of dust, and also as an arsenureted hydrogen gas which had been emitted into the air. He spoke of a Dr. G. Kirchgasser, of Coblenz, who had collected twenty-one cases of such poisoning, some of which had proven fatal. Dr. Kirchgasser's paper on the subject was still on record. Dr. Kirchgasser had stressed the fact that his cases were all of people who were allergic to the poison. Many others had lived and come under its influence in similar conditions, and had not been affected at all.

MISS Wadsworth arrived, laden, and Starr suggested that they all go upstairs. He rapped on the door of Bertha's and Ernest's room, and asked whether they might come in.

The colors of the room struck him like a blow. They alone seemed to make any sound in the deathlike stillness. With a penknife he scraped a strip of vivid green from a hand-blocked leaf of the lurid wallpaper. He immersed a piece in a glass of water. He lit charcoal. He touched litmus into the glass and considered the reaction faintly acid. Some drops of hydrogen sulphide T.S. turned the solution a pale yellow. The vapor from a piece of the paper thrown on the burning charcoal suggested an odor of garlic.

He said to Madam Tuffman: "Your artist in London's Soho had the misfortune, or ignorance, to select one of the most poisonous pigments of his day. The commercial variety of this particular pigment was known to have contained fifty-nine per cent of arsenic, and I believe that in his own mixing the artist must have used even a more lavish hand. As I have said, the known cases of chronic poisoning at that period from wallpaper of this type were noted. These particular rolls were kept through the years in your attic, cased, so its lethal properties remained intact until the rolls were opened, put up, and its poison disseminated in the form of a fine dust and a gas."

Bertha was suddenly radiant, with a whole world that was hers again.

"Then the murderer, Doctor—"

"Exactly. From now on, you have nothing to fear, because the source has been traced: The murderer is—*this room.*"

WHAT THIS WAR IS REALLY ABOUT

(Continued from page 25)

rather close to National Socialist Party ideas.

Hitler and the "Isolationists"

Hitler is operating upon the United States as he did in Germany and in Austria after he had seized power; he initiates activities at various levels simultaneously, with varying purposes and missions. He always gives plenipotentiary powers to several different men and pressure groups. He can play the groups off against each other; he can disavow one or another, accepting it as part of the bargain that the rival organizations combat one another. Thus Hitler's momentary political catchwords and slogans are always mere symptoms of his work, but not necessarily representative of his real aims.

For a system as unscrupulous as National Socialism there are many possible ways of keeping North America from taking active part in a war against Germany. It would be worth careful investigation to find out how far the isolationist repertory of political ideas originated in National Socialist propaganda workshops. National Socialist propaganda always begins with existing ideas, and then by a slight twist and careful alterations manufactures the tools it considers useful.

That there is no longer any Europe worth fighting for; that we must think in Continental terms; that the United States is sufficient unto itself, and that Continental European democracy is no longer a reality—these are the cruder patterns for the brakes now being applied.

The Mystery of Iniquity

Nothing shocked me more profoundly than the visible change in acquaintances and friends whom I thought I knew, when they came under the spell of the National Socialist system. Good people, as far as human beings are ever good, seemed subject to new appetites. My fellow-farmers, honest and upright, pious, God-fearing, if one may call it that, who could never have brought themselves to do a dishonest act—all at once you find them unscrupulous, dishonorable, taking advantage of the weak. They acquire new habits, take mistresses, grow domineering. They gamble, live beyond their means, sink from level to level, and finally become vile scoundrels who think nothing of tormenting, robbing and murdering those weaker than themselves.

This was my experience with a number of my acquaintances, people whom you could have called anything but weak characters, people who came to National Socialism out of decent motives, or who joined hesitantly, critically, with reservations, because they were horrified by the strange element in the movement. I have seen it happen to former socialists and nationalists, liberals and conservatives, this transformation, this deceivableness of uprighteousness. They gave the impression of men possessed. They were no longer themselves. Their alteration of character verged on split personality, on schizophrenia.

What Hitler hinted in conversations years ago is now being followed out. A generation is growing up that can only be called diabolically mistrained—a generation to whom everything human is foreign; people planned according to an efficient scheme, as one plans machines; people out of whom the inhibitions of a moral consciousness and a spiritual personality have been trained; people for whom every reference to a transcendent authority has become meaningless; animals living without future and without hope in the moment alone, and planned for it, as muscle and nerve.

Such training pursues the mystery of iniquity to the very deepest roots of human origins. These people are enticed into "missteps," perversions, violations of civil law, into fraud, theft, outrage. This is done in order to get a blackmailer's hold on them, and thrust them upon the road of amorality, along which they are then pursued to the point of utter unscrupulousness. The qualities of pride and license are awakened in them. They are allowed a chance to display themselves as the "masters," to use their instincts of cruelty, greed for power, and arrogance.

No corrective can exist at the same time with such training of the younger generation. The family, the most powerful cell for the domestication of man, is systematically destroyed. With wily acuteness they attack the point that is at once the most powerful and the most delicate and sensitive spot in humanity. The cells of the private sphere are not destroyed for political reasons alone. The war is on against the foundations of civilization, the primitive beginnings of domestication, against the cells of authority, of subordination, of self-control, of suppression of blind instincts, against the whole elemental nature of human education. Let man lose all ties! Let him become part of the masses, and, as masses, capable of being collectivized. Let him have no responsibilities toward anything except the public power. Let him tame his instincts only where it seems useful to this power. Hitler orders restraints flung away, fulfilling the secret yearnings of a large part of this generation, which is infected with dislike of civilization, and is roaming back into the desert that beckons further on, the promised land.

National Socialism is the most wily and consistent attempt in world history to

render the evil in man and the evil man politically useful. In all countries there are people who find pleasure in torture, enjoy brutality, and are ready for any cruelty. These people, hitherto held in check by the rules of society, by fear of the penal laws or by a civil order that gives them no chance to live according to their instincts, are lured from their dark corners by the new gospel of force, the will to power and unrestraint. Honor beckons, promotion and every enjoyment for their particular requirements.

Something resembling a world conspiracy of all the criminal instincts and forces in man is now arising. As gangsters, members of the demi-monde and criminals recognize one another at a glance, so today there is a great International of the criminal world turned political. We are perhaps only at the beginning of a monstrous development. Whither it may lead, no man can predict.

A Compromise Peace Means Hitler's Ultimate Victory

The slightest reflection will show that an interruption of war by a compromise peace must inevitably mean Hitler's ultimate victory. Another start would enable him to destroy Russia and England singly, to make use of the experiences of the war thus far, and to fill the gaps in his armament. We can already detect Hitler shuffling the card of a new peaceful interval into the pack, and can see how the card is to be played. If Hitler succeeds, not even in making peace, but only in preventing a synchronization of two wars, east and west, against him, then the true visage of his demands for European sovereignty and the basic lines of his world regime will come more clearly into the open. He cannot stop once he has started along this road.

A New Order

This second world war has come upon Europe like a judge's sentence without appeal. The European continent is ceasing to be the intellectual and political center that it has been for so long. The center of gravity is shifting westward. Around the Atlantic Ocean some sort of new Empire of peace may grow up. The power nucleus of the new order is springing from a union of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. Europe will become a hinterland. As the great states of Asia Minor, the empires of the old world along the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Nile fell back before the Mediterranean world, so apparently it is our fate to sink to second or third rank.

It was not fated so. Another course of events would have been possible. A second chance was given us; we did not use it. We misused it. No European order, no matter how rationally designed, can prevent the new reality of an Atlantic world center from growing up during the present war, or stop the creation of an order with gradations that no theories can get rid of. Nor should anyone want to get rid of them.

This breakdown and this peril were needed. What we anticipated by reason remained ineffectual. You cannot vanquish the doctrine of nihilism—for it too is a doctrine—by trying to refute it. It is useless and meaningless to point out discrepancies. But it is also useless to revile one's adversaries, and speak of them only by conceiving a counter-order of one's own. The enemy cannot be driven from the field by proclamations or by fourteen or anv other number of points. Reality alone is convincing and decisive. The nucleus of an actual new order must come into being now, today, during the war. This alone can decide the struggle.

Abstract phrases and grand ideas have become meaningless. Everyone who has any common sense left can feel that what we must do in the future is to dispute position after position with chaos, but not set up a great, solemn projection, not draw up five-, twelve- or twenty-five-year plans. The return to paper democratic life and paper collective security will convince no one today who hears the sage opinion that only the obstinacy of Great Britain is withholding the blessing of peace from this continent.

The New Mayflower

What an uproar of gunnery! Self-defense recalls a forgotten phrase to mind—the words of Pestalozzi, the great Swiss educator: "Education for inner calm." We need something else beside the cult of restlessness, the ethical glorification of work. The revolution of nihilism is restlessness exalted into doctrine—"creative unrest."

We need creative calm; we need composure, not distraction. We need a limit of activity. This war is about inner limitations, not outer frontiers.

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It may not befit a man who cannot take part in this war to say that it is being fought for more than Great Britain. The Empire almost alone is bearing the burden of the war, and only the Empire has a right to set the aims and limits of the conflict. But we too have a right to share in the anxiety—the anxiety lest this last escape of liberty mean the surrender of the thing that enables it to put up its heroic resistance now; worry lest it be so impregnated with Continental ideas that it will no longer be strong enough to accomplish the great positive counter-solution drawn from the aggregate of our Western tradition.

And so we are under way. We are sailing aboard the new *Mayflower,* still in the steerage, with all the strange and yet familiar people in the same suspense and the same mortal peril, crowded together night after night and threatened even by day. We are still sailing out of this age —not toward a new continent, but into a new world age. The fading era ripples and swirls about our vessel. Shall we come safe into port? Shall we be wrecked? And what have we aboard? Not simply the ideas of a new liberty and justice; have our Pilgrim Fathers brought along the ageless documents of a higher humanity, or have we forgotten them?

Let us regain this spirit of the old heroes—not to let our souls seek vanished ages and distant lands, but to lay the foundation without which any community will crash down before it is really built. How we can feel a current sweeping us along! As the bombs shake our emergency roof like the storm shaking the ship, we know we shall never see again the old shore we have left behind us; it fades, and a new one beckons.

(Editor's Note: *About the time this magazine appears, the volume, "The Redemption of Democracy," by Hermann Rauschning, will be on sale. In the space available we have given what seemed to us the most significant and important excerpts; but we recommend that all who can procure and read the entire volume, which is sure to be considered one of the most instructive books dealing with the present crisis.)*

PINK-RIBBON JUROR

(Continued from page 62)

so she had to take a hand. Another had said that he would fill in till they got somebody better, though he wasn't very good—which proved an understatement. But when the game had broken up—

"Tomorrow," said Mr. Friedenthal to Connie, "we might get a good fourth. Out of seven men we ought to find somebody who can keep up with us."

"Us?" she asked. "But you might get two good players; and if you did, you wouldn't want a woman."

"My dear young lady, you may be a woman in private life, but at the bridge table, thank God, you're nothing but a bridge-player."

She began to think maybe this jury would be fun, after all.

The next morning two more jurors were quickly chosen; then came a long array of men who wouldn't do; and the first name called after lunch was Stacy Marill. Having been abroad all summer, he had had no chance to read about the case, hear about it, or form an opinion; he was accepted; and as he took his seat he leaned forward and whispered to Connie:

"Now we've got a date for lunch, and dinner too, every day for the next three weeks."

She smiled, but a little uneasily. She had liked him so much at their first meeting; if the momentum got started again, how could she tell if it meant anything? And Hugh—he was undoubtedly reading about this jury; he'd know that at least one of them was young. She ought to telephone him again this evening, and cheer him up. But that evening Flanagan the guard, under stricter orders now, refused to regard that as an emergency. And she supposed he was right; the less she thought about Hugh in the next three weeks, the better.

For the jury had been completed; she had a job and she ought to earn her wages. No more looking back; she must concentrate on the present, on the case of Sylvanus Magargle—and the eleven men who would help her decide it. A solid-looking lot of men—mostly gray-haired, all married but Marill; but the sort of men she might have met at dinner anywhere. And they didn't like the prospect of three weeks away from their families; as the only woman in the group, she ought to try to make them feel at home.

So that evening she came down to dinner in her smartest cocktail ensemble, and the gesture had its effect. They all behaved as if this were a dinner, not a chance gathering of people employed on the same job.

"I told Miss Ridgefield last night," Mr. Friedenthal confessed, "that she was one of the boys. But she's evidently something better than that. We're all old enough to be her father; let's call her the daughter of the regiment."

The motion was carried with cheers, but there was a glint in Stacy Marill's eye. As they picked up their cocktails, he drew her aside.

"No daughter of mine," he said. "This is a nice long date, Connie—and I'm only sorry we've got all these kibitzers."

"They're no more kibitzers than we are," she told him firmly. "This isn't a date, Stacy; it's a job."

"We'll know more about that," he said, "three weeks from now."

EVERY day from ten to five, except for an hour out for lunch, she sat in the jurybox, trying to understand a case more complex than anything she'd ever tried to master; and the rules of evidence seemed designed to keep the truth from getting out. If she could read about this in the papers, she might know more of what it was about; but the paper that came up with her breakfast every morning (she always breakfasted, lazily, in her room) had had every line about the Magargle case clipped out of it, no matter what might be on the other side of the page.

After that exhausting day, it was a relief to come back to the hotel—to bathe and change, and go down to the little ceremony they always made of that single cocktail before dinner. That was her doing; she had become, without quite meaning to, a sort of hostess for the group. After two weeks of constant association, she felt that she had known these eleven men all her life; she had seen the pictures in the backs of watches, she knew the names of children and grandchildren; she liked every man in the group, and still could understand how he might be something of a nuisance to a woman who had to have him around all the time. . . . Except Stacy Marill.

That first day he had sat down beside her at lunch, and again at dinner, after which nobody challenged his right to the seat next to hers. Also, he was the brilliant fourth in Mr. Friedenthal's nightly bridge-game. Connie was convinced that you could tell a good deal about people by their bridge manners, and his were perfect; he was an ideal partner, a merciless but sportsmanlike opponent; at the table he was nothing but a bridge-player and treated her as one, yet she was subtly certain that every moment he was aware of her as a woman. And she began to be aware of him as a man.

It might not mean anything but the momentum of propinquity; but she had liked him, from the very start. More important, it suggested that what had almost happened to her on shipboard didn't mean anything. She wasn't allowed to telephone to Hugh any more—nor he to her, of course; and now that she no longer heard from him, that cruise began to seem like something she had dreamed. She felt as if she had been serving on the jury all her life, as if she had always been shut up on a desert island with these eleven men—nine of them elderly, all but one of them married.

But in one important point her association with Stacy wasn't like the days on shipboard; they were always together but never alone. By the third week he had got into the habit of walking back to her door with her after the bridge-game; but her door was under the floor-clerk's watchful eye.

"It's the devil," he said one evening as they stood there in the corridor, "never to have a chance to talk with you alone. A three-weeks' date could be a lot of fun —if we didn't have ten chaperons."

"I wouldn't call them chaperons," she corrected, laughing a little. "More like a cheering section."

For these elderly men couldn't help noticing his constant attention; and most of them beamed paternally on the young couple, as if they hoped to see a romance grow out of the Magargle case. Connie had merely thought that was funny; but she had been imprudent in mentioning it to him. For—

"Let's give them something to cheer for," he said. The floor-clerk's attention had been momentarily drawn to her telephone; he bent over Connie and kissed her. She gasped; but certainly she had liked it. "Connie," he said, "we've got one chance for a little privacy. I've discovered that all twelve of us breakfast in our rooms; but anybody could have breakfast served in the dining-room who wanted

it. If you and I got together there tomorrow morning, we'd have the place to ourselves."

This was going much too fast.

"No, thank you. I'm not at my best before I've had my coffee; and I'd have to know a man pretty well before I'd want to breakfast with him."

She had liked to breakfast with Hugh, but— It was the first time she had thought of Hugh for a week. In the early days she had thought about him a lot, wondering what he was doing with his time. Chasing around with other girls? She couldn't blame him; still—

But now all that was remote in the past—and she ought to be thankful. It would have been stupid to let a physical attraction, whipped up by the momentum of isolation, make her throw away her plans, her career. If she married Stacy, now—and she felt pretty certain she was going to have the chance—she could stay in New York and go on with her own work. Maybe some day she would look back on her service on the Magargle jury as the luckiest thing that had ever happened to her, the turning-point of her life. . . . But she did want to see Hugh again, before she made up her mind.

ON the twelfth of September the testimony was finished; on the thirteenth the District Attorney and counsel for the defense told the jury what they thought of it; on the morning of the fourteenth the judge delivered his charge, and the jury retired to bring in a verdict.

The testimony had been voluminous, complicated, and almost contradictory; it seemed to Connie, balancing it up, that the case against Sylvanus Magargle hadn't been proved; but she could see how people might honestly differ. As they did; on the first ballot the jury stood six to six —with Stacy and Mr. Friedenthal, whom Connie admired immensely, both for conviction. And when at eleven that night the judge told them to go back to the hotel and get some sleep, and try to reach a verdict the next morning, they still stood only seven to five for conviction after all their argument.

But such argument; it had been a dreadful disillusionment to Connie. Most of these men who had seemed so intelligent and agreeable had cracked under the strain, snapped and snarled at each other. But not Stacy. He had done little talking, and always in good humor; she was proud of him. In the hotel elevator he went on up with her, paused outside her door.

"You never really know people till you see them under pressure, do you?" she said. "Thank God you behaved like a civilized being; the others—"

"They're tired," he apologized, "and impatient to get home. But if we can't agree tomorrow, the judge will certainly discharge us. So have you and I a date for dinner tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow? I had a sort of date, before this started, but—"

"A lot has happened since this started, Connie. How about meeting me for breakfast in the morning?"

"All right. And we'll see about dinner later." She did want to see Hugh; but she felt that she was being swept along toward a decision.

So Stacy went back to the lounge, where Mr. Friedenthal sat alone.

"Think we'll get an agreement tomorrow, Mr. Friedenthal?" he asked.

"Well—there are five still holding out for acquittal," said the foreman. "One or two of them I might bring around; but Miss Ridgefield—"

"I'll answer for Miss Ridgefield," said Stacy. "Leave her to me."

CONNIE woke early the next morning, and couldn't go back to sleep. It did seem that she ought to give Hugh another chance; yet when marrying him meant giving up everything else— If he still wanted her; maybe all that seemed remote to him too. How could she tell what he might have been doing in these three weeks? She got up and dressed, but it was still too early for breakfast; the morning paper was on her doorsill; she picked it up to kill a little time—and stiffened, with a gasp as her eyes fell on the item:

> Hugh Bardman, 28, living at the Club, was arrested last night in a 52nd Street bar on charges of assault preferred by James Linmouth of West 86th Street. Bardman, it is alleged, knocked Linmouth down when he—

And right there it ended; for a part of the Magargle story, evidently, had been on the other side of the sheet; it had been clipped out, and the rest of the item about Hugh was gone. So that was what he had been doing—getting into barroom brawls! She had thought she knew him—but she had thought she knew these men on the jury too. If he was that kind,

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she'd better not think about him any more—just go on to breakfast with Stacy.

He was alone in the dining-room when she came in; and he kissed her, as if it were already a matter of course. Which, maybe, it was.

"Our first breakfast together," he said, smiling, "and I hope it's going to become a habit. But first," he added, "just in case anybody happens to drop in on us, let me give you a slant on this Magargle case."

"Stacy! Before we've had our coffee?"

"The coffee's coming along. We can't afford to disagree in this case; it's too important. It's time somebody caught up with Magargle. Everybody knows his reputation—"

"But we're not supposed to consider that. Only the evidence."

"Oh, of course that's the theory; but everybody knows—"

He told her, at length, what everybody knew, while she listened in growing consternation. He was the sort of man who argued before breakfast! And the thing he chose to argue about, after starting to say something else, was the Magargle case! Hugh at least had waited till she had had her coffee; and even after that, it was his own case he had argued.

"But I've sworn to decide on the evidence—" she broke in at last.

"My dear, a woman couldn't be expected to understand evidence as complicated as that. Some of these other fellows who were for acquittal are going to change their minds overnight; you may be the only one holding out."

Providentially, at that moment the door opened, and Mr. Friedenthal entered.

"Well, Marill," he said cheerily, "have you convinced her?"

"No!" said Connie, jumping up. "He hasn't convinced me—of anything! Even if I'm as dumb as he thinks I am, I'll make up my own mind. I hate to be pushed!"

Furious, she went back to her own room and ordered breakfast alone; and after she had had her coffee, she decided that she was lucky. Hugh, who wouldn't do anyway, was a barroom brawler; Stacy argued at breakfast, and seemed to think that women had no brains. After these two lucky escapes, she'd be happy in celibacy!

AT six o'clock that evening the judge accepted the jury's statement that it couldn't agree, and discharged it. By that time Connie was limp; the second day's argument had been more bitter than the first. But Stacy had taken little part in it; he seemed rather ashamed of himself. In the bus that took them back to the hotel to get their belongings, he had no chance to talk to her; but he went up with her in the elevator, and as she got her key at the floor-clerk's desk—

"Connie," he said, "I'm sorry I sounded off this morning. If you'll let me take you to dinner, give me a chance to square myself—"

But she wasn't listening; the floor-clerk had handed her a note that had been left this morning. From Hugh. He wasn't in jail, then—not that she cared. The company had changed his schedule, he wrote; he had to leave for Texas this evening. He'd waited, hoping for a chance to see her, but he had to make the seven o'clock train. She looked at the clock over the desk; six-forty-five. Vaguely she heard Stacy pleading with her—

"Where do you get trains for Texas?" she asked the floor-clerk. . . .

"What am I doing?" she wondered, in the taxi that took her to the Pennsylvania station. Telling him good-by, of course; she wanted to see him just once more to wish him luck. She could get off at Newark—the first stop—come back and pack her clothes, and go home to wait for that job in Westchester.

She made the train—just barely—and realized that he might be in any one of a dozen Pullmans. Or the club-car; she tried that first, and she didn't find him. Walking back through the train, she perceived that already they were out of the tunnel, crossing the Jersey meadows, nearing Newark. And then, in a vestibule, she came face to face with him. He stared at her, too bewildered almost for delight.

"CONNIE! Is it really you? What—where are you going?"

"Only to Newark." She couldn't face his suddenly hopeless eyes. "I—I just wanted to tell you that—that I'm glad you didn't go to jail."

"Oh, that! They let me off with a ten-dollar fine in Night Court."

"But what do you mean, getting into barroom brawls? If you can't take care of yourself when I'm not with you—"

"I take perfectly good care of myself," he said. "I was having a drink—just one—when this fellow started making some cracks about the pink-ribbon juror. So I laid him out. And no regrets."

"Pink-ribbon juror? Oh—is that what he called me?"

"It's what everybody's calling you—the papers started it. But the way he talked—your pink ribbons are none of his business!"

("So he fought for me," Connie thought. "Primitive—childish; still—")

"I'm sorry we hadn't any chance to get acquainted in a—a normal background," he said unsteadily. "I know you distrust the desert-island psychology, and I don't blame you. But I'd hoped—" The train slowed down, stopped in a big station.

"Newark!" called the trainman. "Next stop is Trenton."

"Good-by," she said hastily. His eyes were hungry, hopeless. She threw her arms around him, kissed him. Then he was shoving her away—trying to shove her out, as the door was closing. She resolutely stepped back in.

"I don't seem to have any business in Newark," she discovered. "Or Trenton either! There's this to be said for desert islands, darling—you find out whom you can stand and whom you can't. Especially at breakfast." His hands held her, loosely; he couldn't believe it, yet. "I suppose the Pullman conductor can find some space for me," she said, "but I left all my clothes back in the hotel. This isn't much of an outfit to wear to my wedding, but—"

Suddenly he came to life; his arms tightened around her.

"It's been so long—" he said huskily. "I haven't dared— But they couldn't call this tampering with a juror, could they?"

She laughed.

"I don't know, my dear; there's a technical term for that crime, I believe. In legal language, it's called embracery."

A MAN'S DAILY BREAD

(Continued from page 56)

but he had refused. "I couldn't do it," was all he said.

"Somebody has to," she had retorted.

"I'm very sorry." It was all he ever said when he refused her anything.

He was sorry, too, she knew; but he never seemed to think he could help being as he was. And so she had learned to manage without his help because she loved him, always with that deep uneasiness that perhaps her love was not enough for him. But it was all she had.

He opened his shadowy eyes, as though she had spoken her love. "You could let me die, if I'm—too much trouble," he said with faint mischief. It was good to know himself alive again. He died in every gust of pain, no matter what the doctor said. Death was toying with him, keeping him alive for its pleasure. He might fool death and die, if Ruth would let him. But her hands, holding his, would never let him.

"You're plenty of trouble," Ruth retorted. "But you're all I've got, and I'll have to put up with you."

He smiled, knowing this was her way of love.

"Now you go right to sleep," she said sharply.

"I will," he said, and closed his eyes.

"YOU'RE looking pretty good, Dad," Hal said heartily.

He sat down beside his father's bedside. His mother had tried to prepare him for the way the old man would look, but he looked worse than Hal had expected.

"I am feeling fairly well," William replied.

Ruth had told him day before yesterday, when he waked up after his attack, that Hal was coming any day. Then she had read him Hal's letter. He had lain on his pillows thinking of those countries where Hal had been, that now he would never see again.

"I must ask him if spring in England still comes in like a green mist," he thought.

He had spent the hours, while Ruth busied herself for Hal's coming, remembering with happiness the Europe that he had once seen as a very young man.

Ruth came hurrying into his room in mid-afternoon.

"I think I see Hal's car coming," she cried. "Here, let me fix you up!"

She straightened his bed and brushed his hair, and hurried away again. And a few minutes afterward Hal came in, this tall, full-fed man. The years in the war had given him a bearing made for the chauffeur's uniform he now wore. He lived well in a rich man's house, and enjoyed his life as he drove a fine car from one country to another.

"You're looking very well yourself," William said, after a moment.

"Me? Oh, I'm fine," Hal said. He sat turning his new summer cap in his hands, thinking how terrible the old man looked.

"Your mother read me your letter," William said. "And so you've been in every country."

"Yeah," Hal agreed. "Though it don't matter much to me what country I'm in, so long as I keep on goin'," Hal said with a laugh. "You know me, Dad."

"I suppose so," William replied. He sat contemplating his son. Was it for this man that one day, long ago, he had denied himself to stay with Ruth? Was it for this that he had endured the long nights of her weeping and desolation, those nights from which he had wakened after brief sleep, drained of all strength for himself?

THE old man was hard to talk to, Hal thought. He looked like death itself, lying there staring at him.

"Well, Dad," he said with false heartiness, "you must take care of yourself."

"Your mother does that," William returned gently.

"Yeah, I guess she always has and always will," Hal said, and laughed again to make the old man feel better.

"It enables me to give my mind to thoughts which interest me more." His lips curved in his dry old smile. "Your mother is my daily bread," he said. "I eat and I am strengthened."

Hal looked grave. "Are you feeling worse, Dad? Shall I call Mom?"

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"I'm not wandering in my mind, Hal," William replied. His smile grew a shade more humorous. "Tell me, what is England like, in these days? I was in London when I was twenty."

"Oh, I dunno," Hal said. He tried to think. "It's just a big town. It's not like New York, though. Course, they have buses there now. I guess they didn't when you were there."

"Did you see the Abbey? I heard some very fine music there."

"The Abbey?" Hal asked.

"Westminster, you know," William said.

"Oh, that," Hal said. "No, I didn't go inside. I didn't care much for London, that's a fact."

"Perhaps Paris was more fun," William said. "Let's see, you must have been there just when the horse-chestnuts were in bloom. I remember—"

Hal let the old man talk, half-listening. He must go in a few minutes. He had promised Désirée, the madame's French maid, that he'd take her around the city tonight, and he needed a couple of hours to get back.

"Well, those days are over," William said.

"Yeah, I guess so," Hal said. He stood up. "I got to go, Dad. Got to be in New York tonight. Maybe I'll get home again Sunday. That's my regular day off."

"All right, Hal," William said. Try as he would, he could not say "son." He would never feel, as long as he lived, that this was his son. And yet by some curious chance, Hal looked a little like his own father, for whom they had named him—a strange coincidence of mere flesh, for certainly Hal and his grandfather had nothing else between them.

"Good-by, Dad," Hal said. He stood, yearning a little over this tall thin figure so familiar to his sight, and yet whom he had never felt was close enough to be really his father.

"Good-by." William closed his eyes.

DOWNSTAIRS in the kitchen Hal's face above a slice of black chocolate cake was full of true concern.

"He looks awful, Mom."

"I don't know what more to do," Ruth replied. "The doctor says nobody can do anything."

She liked having Hal at home. He was the sort of man a woman felt comfort with—a homey man who enjoyed his food and loved to crack a joke. He had turned out good, after all. Now if he could only settle down! She watched him eat with pleasure.

"Aint you ever goin' to get married, son?" she asked. "The old house is gettin' awful big and lonely. We rattle around in it like a couple old dried peas in a pod, since the girls left us."

He laughed and jumped up. "Maybe," he said teasingly. "But first I gotta find a girl like you, Mom, to make me settle down."

He kissed her and went whistling back to the small bright new car that stood at the end of the path through the vegetable garden. . . .

William lay awake in the great double four-poster bed. A hundred years ago this bed had been brought into the room and never moved again. He had come in to this house and found here his place to sleep. But he slept very little now. There was so much for the old to think about, and so little time left in which to think.

Around him the night was wonderfully soft and deep. Long ago he had learned to love the country night. It had been one of his many compensations. He heard Ruth breathing gently in her sleep at his side. She slept as peacefully now as she had when she was a girl. All the processes of her being were full of health. She was still not old, only sound and ripe. Why did he think of compensations when he had had so rich a life? He remembered her as she had been their first night together. The memory of that passion was only sweetness, now that passion had passed from them both. They did not need it any more. Their flesh had long since been made one. If his spirit was still solitary, it was his fault, not hers. He understood so well that her flashes of temper, her irritations with him, which had grown during the years until sometimes they made him, momentarily, really unhappy, were because their spirits had remained separate, while their bodies were one. He felt humbly that this was his fault, because Ruth had put her whole being into their marriage. But there had been that part of him which she had not needed, and so it had been left in him, unused. It went winging out of him now through the night.

All the world for him to wander in was outside this quiet house. He lay dreaming of things he had never seen, or seen but once when he was very young, and now would never see—people, places, pictures, friends he had never had, companionships he had not found. But there was no pain now in this. Once in his strong middle age there had been. He had groaned then under the bondage of Ruth's need of him, though it had been full of a suffering sweetness too. When her need passed, it was too late. For then he had needed her more than ever she had him. And now he was utterly dependent upon her.

He brought his wandering spirit home to her and felt the comfort of her presence. She was so strong; she loved him; and it was long since too late for anything except their love. Their love had been the reality of his youth.

"I couldn't paint, that year in New York," he thought in one of his flashes of clearest memory. "And I couldn't have painted if I had left her during the years that Hal was lost," he pondered. "I should have been racked with her misery if I had not been here to comfort her."

And now what had he but this tender clinging love of his for her, and her strong love for him? Even if he often made her angry, he knew it was because she loved him. She had taken him into her being, and he could disturb her as no one else could, because he was in her being and yet not wholly hers, however much he tried to be, longed to be. He wanted in nothing to be alien to her any more, for there was a comfort in his love now vaster than life itself. He moved, and felt a piercing pain, and for a second he was frightened.

"Ruth!" he whispered. He did not want to waken her, but if he needed her, he must. He could never go through a bout of his pain alone. But the pain did not return. He waited, but still he was free of it.

"I can sleep," he thought gratefully. But he was a little cold. He turned and curved his body against the warmth of Ruth's body and put his arm about her. They had slept thus so many years that she did not wake. They had slept thus so long together that almost instantly he fell asleep.

WHEN she woke, his arm was fast and hard about her. She could not move from his clutch.

"William!" she cried to waken him.

But he did not waken.

"William!" she screamed.

She forced his arm away then, strong with sudden terror. "William—William—*William!*"

She flung him on his back, and he lay there before her, his face full of peace, unanswering, dead.

"Oh," she moaned. "Oh, dear, oh, dear!"

She leaped out of bed and ran to telephone the doctor. But it was no use, of course.

"It's happened just as you said it would," she gasped. "He's gone from me—in his sleep."

"I'll be right over, Mrs. Braton," the doctor said. "Don't bother about anything—just rest."

But she was not able to rest. She must tend William. There must be something to be done for him. He must be made neat, and his hair brushed and the bed straightened.

She fetched water in a basin and put it on a chair by the bed; and sobbing all the time, she washed his hands and face as she had done every morning when she got up.

"Oh, my dear," she moaned. "Did you call me, and I didn't hear? I'm such a wicked sound sleeper. Oh, William, William!"

She hung over him, knowing it their last hour together alone. Once the doctor came, once they—they began—

She laid her head down upon his breast.

"I wisht I hadn't been so cross with you here lately, William," she murmured. "I wisht it now, something terrible!"

They took him away in such a cruelly little while. She stood watching the men the doctor had called, as they lifted the tall figure from the bed. Other people had dressed him, while she put on her own clothes.

"Go away, Mother," Mary said. Both the girls had come at once, and then Hal had been sent for. "There's nothing more you can do for him."

She went into the kitchen and sat down alone.

"My life's over," she thought. "I've lost him."

She had tried to prepare herself for this moment ever since she knew it must come, but she was not prepared. Nothing could really prepare her for the end of all that for which she had worked and lived. She could not remember what it had been like in this home before William came that day to dinner, nor imagine what it would be like now.

"I can remember exactly how he looked that first day," she thought.

She had loved him the moment she saw him. She loved him now. "Though why I've been so crotchety cross with

him, I don't know and can't think," she said to herself. Tears gathered in her eyes and rolled down her cheeks. "I wasn't good enough for him," she thought. "I was never good enough for him, and all along I knew I wasn't."

This was her grief. She had kept it down all her life, but now it rose up, now that William was gone.

"He was better'n me. He wasn't even cross with me, ever," she thought wretchedly. "Oh, William, I wisht you had been, sometimes!"

Mary came in and found her sobbing aloud. She put her arms about the old woman.

"Oh, Mother, don't," she said. "It had to come, dear. We knew it had to come, and it came so easy, in his sleep."

Ruth shook her head. "I aint cryin' just for that," she said. But she could not explain to her child what had been between her and William. So she only wiped her eyes. "I guess I better get myself cleaned up," she said.

"Yes, folks'll be coming," Mary said.

Jill came in, a pencil and paper in her hand. "Mother, there's a reporter here from the county paper. He wants some information about Dad. They've got the —the obituary, but they aren't quite sure about Dad's family. Wasn't his father the Harold Braton that owned a big railroad company?"

"Yes, he was," Ruth said. "But you tell that man to wait. I'll come and give him the straight of it all myself. I want it right."

She hurried upstairs and washed herself and put on her best black dress, and came down to the parlor where the young man was. Jill was there too. She had never seen her mother so handsome, she thought.

The young man rose. "You are Mrs. William Braton?" he asked.

"I am," Ruth replied. Yes, at least she was that. . . .

She went through three days in a stately dream. Again and again the doorbell rang, and she always answered it herself.

"Mrs. William Braton?"

"I am Mrs. William Braton," she said proudly.

There was a wreath of white flowers, or a telegram, or a little group of schoolchildren, or a stammering halting man.

"I used to see Mr. Braton, ma'am," one said, "used to fit his shoes. I thought maybe—"

To them all she said: "Would you like to see him?"

She led the way into the parlor. The center-table had been taken away, and there William lay on his bier. She had the best of her potted plants about him, and all the other flowers that had come.

SOMETIMES those who gazed at him did not speak, but more often they did.

"He looks wonderful, don't he?"

"He looks what he was," she said.

She was calmer now, because there was so much to do. Sometimes, planning with Mary about sandwiches and cakes for the meal after the funeral, or telling Hal how to take care of the relatives who filled the house, or reading a telegram Jill brought in, she forgot why all this was. It was almost like any big family gathering. All of the relatives were hers today as they had always been. William had nobody except his sister, from whom they had heard nothing in years; she had only an old address in Italy for Louisa. Jill had sent a cable there, but no answer came back.

But her relatives were many. They kept up with each other, and they had always liked William, and in later years respected him too. They were proud of him, now. Her brother Tim who owned the garage in the little town was buying all the newspapers and making a scrapbook of the clippings about William.

"There's even pieces about him in the Philly papers," he said proudly. He read aloud: " 'William Braton was at one time regarded as one of the most promising of the younger American artists.' "

There was nothing in the New York papers. They could hardly expect that. But every newspaper in the county carried long columns about him. Ruth found time to read them all, down to the last paragraph: "He is survived by his widow—" That was she. She was William's widow. Upon the strength of this dignity she passed the hours until William was taken from the house on the morning of the third day, to return no more. She followed him then, Hal driving her slowly in his bright new car. Behind her came the long line of slow cars moving down the country road to the cemetery that stood around the church to which William had always refused to go. But here he came now, to rest at last in Ruth's family lot, where her father and her father's father were buried. And from here he would wander no more.

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REDBOOK MAGAZINE
McCall Street Dayton, Ohio

The house was very quiet. She had insisted that everybody go. It had been easy to persuade the girls. After the big funeral feast was over and the relatives gone, and everything cleaned, she had said to them:

"Now you both run along home. Phil and Elmer and the children will be needing you. Besides, there isn't a thing you can do here. If I want anybody, I'll keep Hal."

"Sure," Hal said. He had counted on getting back to the city tonight, but if Mom wanted him—

So Mary and Jill had gone. Hal, they told each other, had no responsibilities, and could stay better than they could.

But it was easy to persuade him to go too. Ruth said plainly:

"I want to be by myself, son."

"You'll be lonely, Mom," he objected.

"No, I won't. A woman don't get lonely when she's been married as long as I have. The end of her life meets the beginning again."

But he was afraid he ought not to go, and she had to make him at last, before he put on his coat and hat. She had to walk with him to his car. Even then, with his hand on the wheel, he hesitated:

"Sure you're all right, Mom?"

"Sure I am," she replied.

Oh, be gone, be gone, her heart cried at him, longing for freedom to mourn!

But he lingered, seeking for some last word of comfort for her. It had been so hard for her, the relatives had all said when she was not in the room, because William had "passed away" in his sleep, without a last word to her. They put great importance upon last words, and they repeated solemnly the last things that others had said. Hal searched his memory and found some words, those which he remembered, because at the time his father had spoken them, he had not understood them. He did not understand them now, but maybe she would.

"Mom," he said, "that last time I talked with Dad, he said something about you that I was going to tell you."

"Did he?" she cried. "Oh, Hal, what was it?"

"He said you was his daily bread, Mom."

He watched her face to see if she were comforted. And he saw that she was. She understood, then, what the old man meant.

"I thought maybe you'd like that, Mom," he said, pleased with himself.

"It was a wonderful sweet thing for William to say," she replied.

WHEN Hal was gone, she went to the kitchen. Bread! William had been so fond of good bread. And he always said hers was the best in the world. He talked like poetry about her sometimes when she stood kneading bread at this very table. She got out a bowl, a jug of milk and the loaf for her supper and sat down to eat it. Bread meant something special to William. That first picture he had painted of her had been with a loaf of bread in her hand.

"Bread is my real food," he used to say.

"He couldn't have said a more meaning thing about me," she thought gratefully. Somehow it eased her for everything. She had always been proud to be his wife and still always there was the inner discouragement of knowing she wasn't good enough for him. But if she was like bread to him, then it meant he couldn't have done without her.

"I guess he didn't mind my being a mite cross once in a while," she thought. "I guess he knows there just wasn't anybody but him—nor ever will be. And I did everything for him."

Her eyes filled, but she kept on eating. This was the first of many meals she must eat alone, and she might as well get used to it first as last. The house was so still she could have been frightened if she had been a woman like that. But she wasn't. She could always do what had to be done. So she sat, finishing her meal. About her there was not a sound, inside the house or out. It was the time of evening when even the birds were still. Then suddenly she was overcome with longing for him. She could eat no more, and she put down her spoon, and sat staring out into the bright evening.

"Oh, *William,*" she said heavily. Her voice was loud in the emptiness about her.

He was really gone.

AND then suddenly in the stillness there was a noise. She heard a clatter in the barn. Something had fallen.

She hurried out of the kitchen and across the grass to the barn bridge and up to the open door.

"Who's there?" she called sharply.

A tramp, likely, she thought, but she wasn't going to be afraid.

"It's me," someone said. The voice came from the room under the hayloft where William kept his paintings.

"For pity's sake!" she said, and went quickly across the rough old floor and looked in.

There among William's tumbled paintings stood Jill's boy Richard.

"Rickie, for pity's sake!" she repeated. "What you doin' here?"

"I wanted to see his—his pictures," the boy faltered. He had been crying, and his cheeks were streaked with dust from the canvases he had been turning over as he wept.

"Well, why didn't you ask me to show 'em to you?" Ruth said.

She sat down on William's old chair. He had sat at his easel in later years, when standing tired him. Then she took the boy on her knees.

"Mercy me, look at that face! Here, I'll wipe it with my apron." She wiped his face, and he was comforted by her scolding tenderness, since there was no one else to see her babying him. She gave him a hearty kiss.

"Now then, want I should show you Granddad's pictures?"

"If you don't think he'd care."

"He'd love it," she said briskly. She put a picture on the easel. "Now, this here one, he painted one day—I can remember like anything—when they was making hay. A thunderstorm come up—see, there it is, you can see it just as like—"

One by one she lifted the paintings, remembering.

"Now this one he always said just wouldn't come right—"

"I think it's good, though, Grandmom," he said eagerly.

"So do I," she said. "Wonderful! He was a grand wonderful man, Richard, and

we mustn't forget it, shall we, you and me?"

"No—never."

They looked at all the paintings and then she said: "Now it's time for you to be going home, dear. Your mom will be worryin'."

They stacked the paintings carefully and walked away together, hand in hand, out into the clear twilight. Then he gathered all his courage.

"Grandmom!"

"Yes, Rickie?"

"Can I have his big paint-box?"

She was startled, and he held his breath, waiting.

"Why, I couldn't—I don't know if he'd want me to give that away," she said. "What would you do with it?"

"Paint pictures—please, Grandmom—anyway, when I'm grown up—like Grandfather!"

He was clutching her waist now.

"My goodness," she said. "Where'd you get such an idea?"

"I don't know—it's been inside me a long time. Please, please!"

Inside him! Well, she thought, looking down into the pleading face at her breast, William *could* be inside this boy.

"You'll have to be awful good," she said solemnly.

"I will," he said clearly.

He dropped his arms from her waist and stood, a little figure haunted, William's spirit looking out of his eyes.

THE END

SCREENO NIGHT

(Continued from page 39)

the Onslows carried formality like a prayerbook. He jumped out of the self that had been molded in a circle of picked acquaintances and staked boundaries. He knew that he was not going to lose her.

He said wistfully: "Are you a New Yorker? I'm from out of town. This is my first day here."

Jo said gently: "You must be lonely." She knew the trying period a New York family went through in making friends in a new neighborhood.

Peter said: "You're the first person I met here, and you've brought me luck. If you showed me around the city, it would be like holding a four-leaf clover."

"I'd love it," said Jo, and there was a quiver in her voice because the bursting of a Roman candle was so breath-taking that one forgot about the sputter. She added: "I live with my family. Can you call at my home Saturday evening about seven?" She had said Saturday deliberately, to let him know that she had no steady boy friend, and that to date, her Saturday nights were no installment payments on a prospective engagement ring.

Even while he was writing down the address and name, Peter became Onslow enough to remember that he knew nothing at all about her, and that there were unsavory stories about preying city women who invited unattached strangers home. He looked into her eyes. His ancestor had founded a town in a wilderness because of a sunset on a hill. He would take a chance on the singing dawn in a girl's steady gray eyes.

"I'll enjoy meeting the Oldpenny family," said Peter Onslow.

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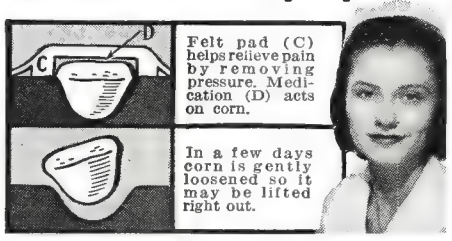
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NOW I AM A HUMAN BEING

(Continued from page 51)

no idea what was going on. Mr. Winthorpe started over to where she was standing, then stopped, halfway between her and Huelsenkop. Lenz decided he'd have to have a serious word with Anita later. But just then she said: "Please excuse me. Turn the news on. You all want to hear it."

"No, darling. Forgive me," said Huelsenkop, and took her in his arms.

Lenz turned on the music softly. Anita and Huelsenkop really began to dance. Mr. Winthorpe seemed surprised.

"Anita got what she wanted again," thought Rosl, when she heard the radio out in the kitchen. Hans von Keller ate ravenously.

WHEN Rosl came back into the studio with him, she saw Lenz opening the black portfolio where he kept his German sketches. There were sheets he worked on over and over again; among them, many scenes from the concentration-camp, which Rosl could not bear to look at. He was not yet satisfied with them. "Not to judge, only to draw what I have seen and can still see. That is what I want to accomplish," he said often, in despair. As far as Rosl knew, he had never shown them to anyone except to her and to Schneele, who appeared in them over and over again. Strange that he should be showing them to Mrs. Winthorpe.

Anita was dancing now with Mr. Winthorpe. Huelsenkop watched them, but obviously his thoughts were far away. He started when Hans von Keller sat down beside him. Rosl felt a little deserted, and thought perhaps she ought to go down to the Schneeles after all, in order to see for herself how Minnchen felt. The Professor was, even though Lenz often defended him against the accusation, not always quite himself. At such times he tended to exaggerate. And the dance-music was getting on her nerves.

She had already started for the door when Anita and Mr. Winthorpe blocked her way. "Mr. Winthorpe is an expert. You'll see," said Anita. She glided out of his arms, and danced over to her wineglass by herself. Mr. Winthorpe bowed formally.

Rosl danced with him, at first, as he with her, out of courtesy. But he danced so well that after a few measures she began to enjoy it. She had fun, too, showing Lenz, who never danced, how good she was. His eyes were following her covertly. But she saw.

"How do you like this country?" asked Mr. Winthorpe.

"We're happy here."

"We're not as sophisticated as the Europeans."

"Do you think so?"

"How long have you been here?"

"Two years and a few days."

"Only two years? Your English is excellent."

"I learned it over there."

"My wife thinks your husband is a great artist. I can see it by her interest. They say she really understands those things. I'm no judge. Too little time for art."

Rosl did not know what she ought to say, but Mr. Winthorpe hardly seemed to expect an answer. He danced farther and farther away from the others, and said softly:

"Your friend Anita is unhappy. Could you tell me how to help her?"

"Unhappy?" Rosl repeated. But then something made her say: "She's in love with her husband, Mr. Winthorpe."

"Yes, but she is unhappy."

"Perhaps she is too ambitious, too anxious for success, any success, and therefore she is eternally being disappointed. Her husband is a beaten politician now. She must wait. But she is impatient by nature." Rosl noticed she was quoting Lenz, and had the feeling she had said too much.

"And she loves him, you say? Are you sure?"

"Yes. Sure." Her voice was full of conviction, but then the next moment she was not so sure again. If Anita loved her husband, then it was not the way she loved Lenz. . . . But perhaps there were many sorts of love.

After the dance Anita took Rosl aside. "Is there any more wine?" she whispered. "I've drunk up all I could find." They went to get the last bottle. (It was not really the last, but Rosl wanted to keep one for later, when everybody else was gone.)

They had hardly got back into the room when there was a knock at the door. Hans von Keller went out to open. It was Schneele. "Minnchen is asleep now," he whispered to Rosl before she introduced him.

Schneele's entrance changed the whole spirit of the evening. The Professor was in one of his moods in which gravity and humor kept changing, indistinguishable, one from the other. Only Rosl, who alone knew, or at least could guess what he had gone through in the past few hours, was able to perceive his inner weariness. He wiped his forehead repeatedly with a flowing white handkerchief, always hiding his crippled fingers quickly afterward. Then he would stand in the center of the studio, hands in his coat pockets, rocking his weightless body back and forth on the balls of his feet. So might he have stood once when he was stating his opinion to his medical subordinates.

AT his entrance, Mrs. Winthorpe had risen in an uncontrolled movement of horror, a sheet from the black portfolio in her hand. It was a sketch of a torture, with Schneele as the victim.

"He's alive," she said, and stared unbelievingly at him.

Schneele, who saw at one glance what she had in her hand, walked toward her immediately. "Yes," he said, smiling. "What you see there is the truth, but I have no complaints. As far as I myself am concerned, the concentration-camp did me nothing but good—that is, aside from my health. It was a purgatory for me. No one should pity me."

He meant what he said quite seriously, but Rosl and Lenz knew, too, what delight he took in disconcerting people. The evil expression passed over Anita's face.

Rosl remembered what the girl had said a few days ago. "I hate all refugees," she had cried, she who was herself a refugee. "They are not normal. I don't care why. I want normal people around me."

"What do you mean by purgatory?" asked Mr. Winthorpe in the silence that had fallen.

That was exactly what Schneele had been waiting for. With a brisk little movement he turned toward Mr. Winthorpe. It seemed he took special pleasure in answering just him. His eyes sparkled. "I was a bourgeois," he said, "an elegant, man-of-the-world bourgeois—ate too much—too many women—suits and neckties from London—the whole damned foolishness. Now I am a human being."

He had hardly ended, when from Mrs. Winthorpe came again that high, bell-like laughter that seemed to have an existence all its own; only, this time it rang clearer and a little sharper than before, and then broke off even more abruptly.

Winthorpe pretended again not to have heard it, and shortened the embarrassment of the moment by saying unhesitantly: "That is very interesting, Professor." And then again, quietly and slowly, as if he were thinking over what he had heard: "That is very interesting, and it sounds convincing." He himself sounded very intelligent, all of a sudden.

SCHNEELE paid no attention to him. His glance had grown hazy. His voice had changed. "Of course, I wish no other man my experience. Anything would be better than to let that happen." The horror of what he remembered colored every word.

But the next moment, he had turned laughingly to Huelsenkop.

"How go things with you?" he cried. "Have you dug out what makes the world go to pieces? Analyzed and repaired the social forces? When do we get the new platform? Who's going to win the war? It's your profession, to know those things, Huelsenkop."

"You know I was an incompetent politician," said Huelsenkop, evading the questions. He looked at his watch.

"Yes, or else we wouldn't be here," said Anita, tactlessly.

"You are mistaken, my child," Schneele said to her. "You are mistaken." But he did not explain what he meant by that.

Anita started to flare up, then controlled herself. And Mrs. Winthorpe took advantage of the moment. "We have to go," she said. "I'm sorry, but we still have another appointment." She said it very quietly, but it was clear that any objection would be useless, even impossible.

"Where is Keller?" asked Lenz, looking around.

It turned out that Keller had gone without anyone's having noticed it.

On the way out, Mrs. Winthorpe took Rosl aside. "I was fascinated by your husband's drawings," she said. "Please forgive me if I was impolite. I hope I may come again." She was so surprisingly affectionate about it that Rosl was a little embarrassed.

"Of course," she said. "We'd be very happy."

"*Auf wiedersehen,*" said Anita. "We'll phone you," Huelsenkop added. Mr. Win-

1.
Haenigsen
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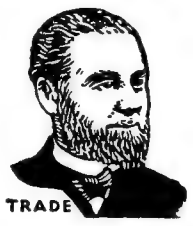

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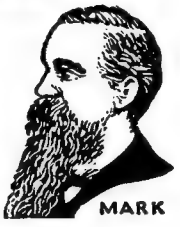

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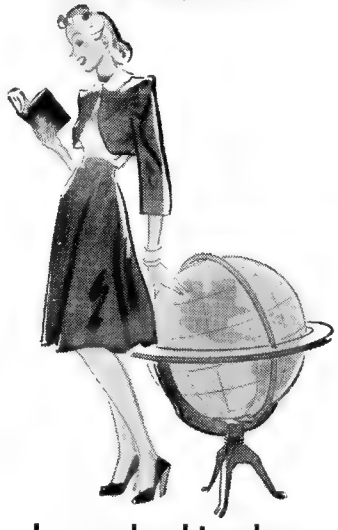

—by a school teacher

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thorpe went through all the conventional farewell formalities.

Schneele waited until the others had got down the stairs, but they could not make him stay, even when Rosl told him it was their wedding anniversary and they still had another bottle of wine. In the doorway he turned. "Lenz," he said seriously, "Lenz, take care of Rosl. Everything we are and want to be we must act toward those closest to us. It is my fault that Minnchen has not become what she really is. She suffered under the world's brutality, and I did not help her. For I was a part of the brutality. I am one of the ancestors of the Nazis. Without people like me, they would never have been possible. We amused ourselves instead of bothering about the handwriting, the *mene tekel* on all the walls. Minnchen saw what was coming, and lost her mind over it. *Mea culpa.* I let her waste away. She was an angel, while I forgot there was a God. And a devil too. A God and a devil. That is the secret and the answer to all riddles. Good night, children." And with that he left.

When Lenz had locked the door and turned around, Rosl stood opposite him, straight against the wall, with tears in her eyes.

"I am afraid," she admitted. "It's shameful, Lenz, but I am afraid. They are all unhappy. All of them. Why is it? Why? Oh, Lenz, don't let us get to be like that."

LENZ talked late into the night. He spoke of the meanness and the greatness of man, of the curse of faint-heartedness and the blessing of courage, of the duty and the joy of serving life.

They woke at dawn. The sun rose over the city for another day.

REDBOOK'S PICTURE OF THE MONTH

(Continued from page 12)

who walked past barber-shops so that she could be insulted. The gay blades of the period rushed out and whistled, and called, "I love my wife, but oh, you kid!" *Biff Grimes* was smitten; but each time he had a date with her, she brought her girl friend *Amy,* who was always pushed off onto *Biff,* while *Hugo* got the Strawberry Blonde. On those rare occasions when he did take her out, she made a sucker of him through her expensive demands.

Hugo went up in the world, while *Biff* plodded on with his correspondence-course in dentistry, and *Virginia* married *Hugo.* In time *Biff* married *Amy.* With *Hugo* successful, *Virginia,* bored with him and the life she led, saw an opportunity to amuse herself on the side with *Biff,* and she forced *Hugo* to take *Biff* into his firm. As a result of a graft scandal, in which *Biff* was innocent and *Hugo* guilty, *Biff* went to prison and emerged a full-blown dentist.

When *Hugo* sat in the chair that afternoon, *Biff* saw and heard *Virginia* and compared her with his own *Amy.* Just before he applied the gas to secure his revenge, he located *Hugo's* ailing tooth and yanked it without any anesthetic, for he felt that *Hugo* had been punished amply by marrying the Strawberry Blonde.

THAT is the outline of the story. Its richness and appeal lie in its nostalgic qualities. The end of the Nineties are on the edge of the conscious life of many of us, and the influence of the period was felt well into this century. Therefore the foibles, the vanities and the virtues of that age are reasonably familiar to us; at least, they are close enough for us to look upon them and laugh. And those with parents in their sixties can have great sport kidding their elders. What gay blade of that period did not have a Strawberry Blonde in his life, or wished he had?

Cagney is still the aggressive little guy, the undersized mug who gets pushed around. There hardly is a scene in the film in which he doesn't have a black eye. His visits to the barber-shop to have a leech applied to the shiners are continuous.

But in spite of this militancy, he is horrified when *Amy* tells him that her mother was a bloomer girl, that she smokes cigarettes and that her aunt is an actress. Of course, Miss De Havilland's *Amy* later confessed that her mother only wanted to be a bloomer girl but her father wouldn't permit it; that she never actually lights cigarettes but just holds them in her lips; and that her aunt's stage career was limited to a single performance in a church play.

WHILE Cagney's swashbuckling comedy dominates the play, it is Miss De Havilland who captures your heart with her delightful bravado. She tries so hard to be modern; she talks of equal rights and the single standard. But when she is cornered, she is terrified. And when she winks, she is just about the most adorable creature you have ever seen.

Of course, Miss Hayworth as the Strawberry Blonde will arrest the attention of the male customers. Hypocritically proper, shocked by every honest expression, because it is ladylike to be shocked, she is a beautiful shrew who lures her men and then makes chumps of them. In her better scenes, she is a vital, magnificent and exciting creature; and *Biff Grimes'* delirium over her is as understandable as her type is obvious.

Jack Carson in his third important film (he was in the Rogers-Coleman "Lucky Partners" and the Lombard-Montgomery "Mr. and Mrs. Smith") again demands recognition for his portrayals. As the arrogant, scheming, ever plausible *Barnstead* who marries the Strawberry Blonde, his is a graphic portrait of the dude of the Nineties.

Undoubtedly some of the items in the film are apocryphal, but in general "Strawberry Blonde" is an authentic picture of the ten years from 1895 to 1905. The customs, the attitudes and the physical embellishments are entirely typical of the times.

Raoul Walsh directed the piece in high good humor, and in this he was aided by the Brothers Cagney: James the actor, and William the producer. The venture rollicks along at a merry pace; some of the comedy is gentle and some is strident.

But apparently that was the kind of age it was.

Of particular appeal is the music. Many of the tunes your dad or granddad picked out on the mandolin are there—"Meet Me in St. Louie, Louie," "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey," "Love Me and the World Is Mine," "In the Good Old Summer Time" and a lot of others.

But strangely, it is quite likely that when you leave the theater, you'll be whistling or singing the theme song, which starts: *"Casey would waltz with the Strawberry Blonde—and the band played on."* It's a catchy tune, but if you want to preserve the illusion of youth, make out as if it is the first time you have ever heard it. If you remember it too well, some heartless prankster may yell: "Twenty-three! Skiddoo!"

THE NEW CULBERTSON SYSTEM FOR 1941

(Continued from page 53)

table is and has always been (and has been so subtitled in all my books) a table of *defensive values.* Honor-tricks primarily represent card combinations which may be expected to win tricks even against the opponents' trump contract. In this sense, a singleton or void has a quite obvious and unquestionable defensive value.

If the void or singleton is in some plain suit (not trumps), it very often produces a ruff which causes one or more tricks to be won by otherwise worthless trumps. This does not necessarily happen on every hand, but if it happens once in *four* hands, it justifies its rank as a plus value.

If the void or singleton happens to be in the opponents' trump suit, do not get the impression that its defensive value no longer applies. If you have a void or singleton in trumps, it often means that declarer is getting a bad trump break. This may make it possible for you to defeat contracts which would otherwise be made against you.

In the February, 1941, issue of REDBOOK I mentioned the fact that experts will make an opening bid on hand No. 1, and will pass hand No. 2 in the following examples:

1:	♠ K 10 9 6 4	*2:* ♠ K 10 9 6 4
	♥ K J 8 5	♥ K J 8
	♦ A 6 3	♦ A 6 3
	♣ 4	♣ 4 2

You can imagine how complicated the average player would find it if I said: "Bid with 5-4-3-1, 6-4-2-1, 6-3-3-1, 5-4-4-0, 4-4-4-1, and pass with 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2, etc."

The inclusion, however, of the void or singleton *in the honor-trick table* automatically solves this problem and puts every hand into the proper bracket of "bid" or "pass." That is why I say that a change such as this *simplifies* the system. The average player begins to bid exactly as the expert does; the advanced player need no longer remember a list of several "exceptions to the rule."

Finally, to those who will ask why a void is not given a higher valuation than a singleton, I answer: *Of course* a void is worth more than a singleton. I will even

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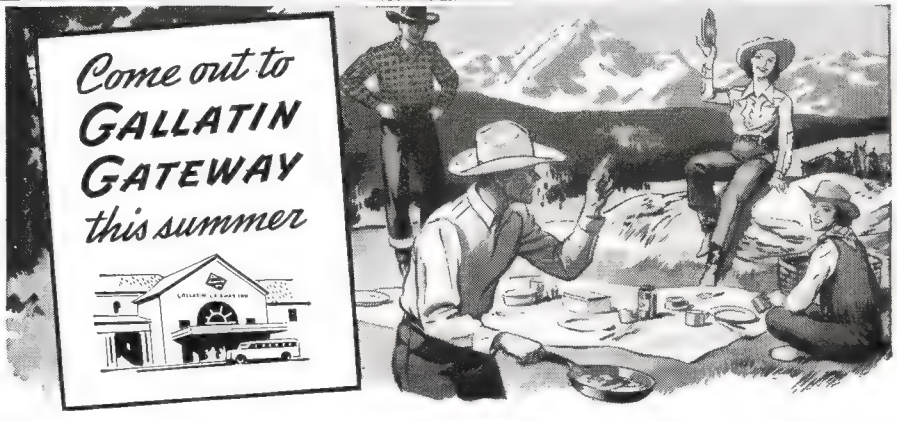

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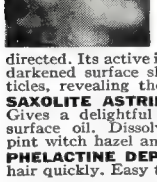

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go so far as to say that in some cases a void suit in the hand *is* worth half an honor-trick. As I said before, the plus value is a fluid value. Exactly as the J-10 in A-J-10 and the J-2 in A-J-2 are counted the same, although the J-10 is patently worth more, so the void and the singleton are each counted as a plus value, although the void may sometimes be worth more than the singleton. To value your hand accurately to the nearest plus value is possible. It is futile to try to find the infinitesimal difference between *one* plus value and *another*.

New Biddable Suits

The second step in hand-valuation is the definition of biddable suits. What suit is strong enough to bid?

Lately there has been a constant trend toward lightening the requirements for biddable suits. Of course, for a long time we have all made opening bids on fairly weak *minor* suits. Sometimes, though only as a choice of evils, we have gone so far as to open the bidding on a three-card suit, but always in clubs and diamonds. After all, there is never much likelihood that you will have to play a high contract in a minor suit. When you bid on a weak *major* suit, however, you are courting disaster. Your partner will, on the slightest provocation, jump you to a game contract, and you may be in serious trouble because the opponents have most of the high trumps.

If your opponents should happen to play the hand, you face still another danger: If your partner has a holding such as K-x in your suit and blithely leads out the king against an opponents' contract, you do not want to find him leading into an A-Q combination held by the opponents. For that reason any four-card suit, to be biddable, should be headed by at least the queen.

Some extremists are making opening bids in major suits as weak as J-x-x-x or even 10-x-x-x. Analysis proves that to be a losing game. Furthermore, I have found that a large majority of our leading players frown upon such bids. They may at times bid a major suit as weak as Q-x-x-x, K-x-x-x or A-x-x-x, *but they avoid it whenever possible.*

The only time you do make an opening major-suit bid in such a suit is when your alternative is to do something which would be even more unsound. I have cited the following hand:

♠ Q 8 5 2	♦ 9 7 6
♥ A K 7 4	♣ A 8

On the above hand it is pardonable to open with a bid of one spade and avoid the embarrassment of making an overbid when our turn comes to rebid; for if we bid one spade, and partner responds two diamonds, we can bid two hearts with the following advantages: First, the two-heart rebid warns partner that you have a possible minimum and does not encourage him to overbid. Second, if partner has a weak hand but prefers hearts, he can pass; if he prefers spades, he can go back to two spades. The advantage of a final contract of two-odd over a final contract of three-odd is immeasurable. Beyond the obvious fact that the lower contract is easier to make, there is a more subtle advantage in that the opponents are far less likely to double it.

The requirements for biddable suits in the Culbertson System for 1941 have therefore been altered to this important extent:

A suit as good as Q-4-3-2, K-4-3-2 or A-4-3-2, or better is biddable, but only when the hand also contains another biddable suit. That is to say, the requirements have been relaxed *only to avoid the even more dangerous situation* which might arise from being forced either to pass a forcing bid, or to make an unsound rebid.

As an example of this change, you should bid one heart on hand No. 1, and pass on hand No. 2 below:

1:	*2:*
♠ 8 5 3	♠ 8 5 3
♥ K 7 6 2	♥ K 7 6 2
♦ A Q 10 5	♦ A Q 10
♣ A 6	♣ A 6 3

Another change in the requirements for biddable suits involves five-card suits which do not contain a single high honor. Such a suit has never before appeared as biddable, in the Culbertson System.

It is demonstrably unsound to bid a suit such as 9-8-6-5-2. It may cause partner to make a bad lead; it may cause him to overvalue trump support such as Q-x-x or A-J-x. I cannot and will not advise bidding such a suit *unless the alternative is to do something that would be even worse.* Consider the following hand:

♠ 9 8 6 5 2	♦ A 4 2
♥ A K 8	♣ K 6

It would be a crime to pass that hand; such a decision must not even be considered. It would be equally a crime to bid one club or one diamond, for then you would never have a chance to tell partner that you have a five-card spade suit without making him think that you have a six-card minor suit as well, which would give him a hopeless misconception of your hand. Therefore the only thing you can do is to bid a spade.

For this reason we have a second change in the standards for biddable suits in the 1941 Culbertson System:

A five-card suit as weak as x-x-x-x-x and up to J-x-x-x-x is biddable, but should be classed with a minimum four-card suit like Q-x-x-x, and bid only when the hand also contains another biddable suit, or when you have more than the minimum in honor-tricks.

Finally, there has been a minor reduction in the requirements for *rebiddable* suits. Since 1935 we have defined a rebiddable suit as A-K-x-x-x, or Q-J-10-x-x, or better. In order to create a safe rebid at the range of two, we have *countenanced* (but not recommended) rebidding A-J-9-x-x, or K-Q-x-x-x.

The old requirements served one purpose:

They offered safety when partner had *nothing* in support of the suit. Unfortunately, the insistence on safety proved in practice to create another evil. A suit such as K-Q-x-x-x often was not rebid, with the result that partner never raised, holding such support as A-x or three low cards. One of the greatest weaknesses of even advanced and expert players soon proved to be their failure to reach major-suit game contracts when one partner had a fair five-card suit, and the other partner had three little cards, or a double-

ton honor, in support. On such hands losing no-trump contracts were usually bid instead.

This typical hand was played in a national tournament:

	♠ Q 6 ♥ 9 7 3 ♦ A Q J 8 4 ♣ A 7 2	
♠ K J 9 8 5 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ 4 3	N W E S	

The East-West hands offer an admirable play for game at spades, while at no-trump the chance is dubious at best. However the club suit is divided, the defenders must be able to win three club tricks plus their two aces and defeat three no-trump. Yet nineteen out of twenty pairs which played this hand got to three no-trump and went down, while exactly *one* pair reached four spades and made it.

The loss through failure to reach such contracts proved immeasurably greater than anything that might possibly be lost through getting stuck in a suit contract with insufficient support in partner's hand. As a result the following minor change has been made in the rebiddable-suit requirements:

A five-card suit headed by A-J, K-J or Q-J-9, or any six-card suit, is rebiddable. In the following hand:

♠ K Q x x x ♦ K x x
♥ A Q x ♣ x x

the proper opening bid, as always, is one spade. If partner responds two no-trump the rebid should be three spades, not three no-trump as is the custom nowadays. Partner may have something like J-x-x in spades and the perfect fit in a major suit will never be found unless the suit is rebid.

New Opening Bids

The next change in the fundamentals of bidding concerns opening suit-bids of one. Any such change is important, because 95% of all hands at contract bridge are opened with a one-bid in a suit.

The changes in opening-bid requirements have accomplished two things: First, they have somewhat reduced the minimum strength needed to make a bid on several types of hands. Second, they have greatly simplified the task of the player in judging whether or not his hand is biddable.

Lightening the standards of opening bids increases the number of hands on which you can bid. You gain an immediate and measurable advantage whenever you open the bidding. Here are some of the advantages:

1: You make it more difficult for the opponents to bid. For all they know, you have not a minimum but a *maximum* opening bid, ranging up to five honor-tricks, and they must hesitate to overcall too freely for fear they may be doubled and set.

2: You give your partner definite information as to the strength of your hand and make it possible for him to bid or to double the opponents, when otherwise it would be dangerous.

3: You find the ultimate in safety on borderline hands. Your opponents cannot very easily double you at your low bid because they themselves have not had the chance to exchange information. This

(Continued on page 119)

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RICHES

by ANGELO PATRI

ALL the fairy tales—and fairy tales are the time-tested truth of men's dreams—begin in poverty, carry on through trial, and end in riches. Men have lived those tales in centuries of struggle for life's rich rewards, for men must feel like victorious conquerors or go down as beaten failures.

The search for riches is the adventure that keeps men eager to live and keen to labor. The going business, the house, the car are the immediate rewards for which he strives; but they are more: They are the symbols of his dream, that beautiful intangible thing that beckons him on to greater struggles and higher achievements.

There is another quality in this, the kernel of truth that lies in the heart of this fairy tale that is man's life. Nothing that a man wins and holds in his hands is lasting happiness. That lies in the struggle and the search. When that ends, when the worker says, "My task is finished," the light of life is quenched in his heart; and though his hands are full, his life is empty. It is the struggle, the seven impossible tasks laid upon the Prince, that is magic, the joy of men's lives.

And—young people should consider this: It seems that the more meager the beginning, the harder the way, the richer and fuller the reward. He who starts with empty hands, making his bricks with whatever straw the winds send his way, wins the highest reward life affords.

During an after-dinner talk the question rose as to the happiest time in people's lives; and the richest man in the room turned to his wife and said: "It was when we had nothing but our dream, wasn't it, Mary? Remember when you gave me your neck-chain to get the first model out of the freight station? Remember the night when we had nothing in the house to eat? You found a cupful of flour in the cupboard and made a cake of it for our supper, and we had great fun over it. Next day we got our first contract and thought we were made; we had nothing, but we felt richer than Midas."

Isn't it always that way? Aren't we happiest when we are struggling against the odds, pitting our wits against the other fellow's, our strength against life's forces, wresting our prize from their grip? The houses and cars and shining things we own are comfortable and pleasant, but they are not the real thing. The joy is in the winning of them.

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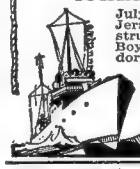
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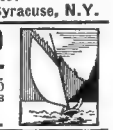
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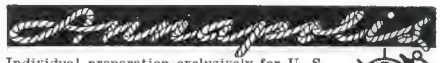

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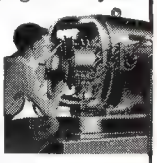

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THE NEW CULBERTSON SYSTEM FOR 1941

(Continued from page 109)

they can do only by bidding, and the moment they bid, you are free from the danger of a double.

4: In case the opponents do have most of the strength and play the hand, you have given your partner information which will help him in choosing his opening lead and which will guide him in defense throughout the play.

In 1935, in addition to our basic requirements for opening bids, we stated six or more cases in which an exception to the general rule should be made. The 1941 changes in the honor-trick table, which embrace considerations of both distribution and hand solidity, now make a long list of exceptions unnecessary.

The following requirements constitute the formula for opening bids, and the differences in honor-trick requirements mount so regularly, step by step, that a player can apply the requirements from logic without having to commit them to memory. The rule is:

Make an opening suit-bid of one, vulnerable or not vulnerable, first, second, third or fourth hand, with:

2-plus honor-tricks with a six-card major suit;

2½ honor-tricks with a five-card rebiddable suit;

2½-plus honor-tricks with two biddable suits, if one is a five-card suit;

3 honor-tricks with any biddable suit.

It will be noted that every time you take away from the strength of the trump suit, you have to add a plus value to the honor-trick strength of the hand.

This change creates the following biddable situations:

1: ♠ A x x x x x ♦ Q J x x
♥ K x ♣ x

According to the formula above, this hand justifies a bid of one spade; you have two honor-tricks, and you add a plus value for the singleton club. According to the 1935 requirements, this hand would have been passed.

2: ♠ A 7 5 ♦ K Q 6
♥ Q J 9 6 3 ♣ 4 2

Bid one heart. This hand, too, might have been passed in 1935.

The 1941 requirements have kept carefully in mind the considerations of safety as well as the tremendous advantage of aggressiveness in bidding. Let me urge you not to shudder with fear and hesitate to use them.

Value of Jacks and Tens

Affecting these opening-bid requirements is the only other change in our method of hand valuation. It concerns the solidity of the hand.

It is so obvious that it hardly needs saying that the combination A-10-2 is better than the combination A-3-2. That ten-spot will at times produce a double stopper rather than a single stopper at no-trump when partner has some such insignificant holding as J-x or 9-x-x-x. Yet for years there was no formula by which the average player could include a smattering of jacks and tens in the valuation of his hand.

I learned long ago that bridge-players dislike arithmetic. They are willing to count three honor-tricks, but they balk when asked to count "points" and remember requirements of 12, 15 or 20 points. I decided, however, that the widespread abuse of the opening two-bid necessitated drastic measures, and I introduced a formula whereby a player had no choice but to assign greater value to a suit such as A-K-Q-10-5 than to a suit such as A-K-J-6-5.

Emboldened by the success and popularity of the two-bid formula, I then dared to apply a similar principle to opening no-trump bids. Players were advised (in small and hesitant type) to shade the honor-trick requirements when their hands contained eight or more *honor-cards,* thus bringing into hand valuation any card as high as the ten-spot. Before I published that rule I asked myself, "Will players be willing to count all the way up to eight honor-cards?" I did not and do not say this facetiously. I fully realize that all counting and no play makes bridge a dull game. If I let bridge become a mathematical puzzle I will not have done a very conscientious job in giving millions of players their bridge rules. However, so important is this principle that I finally published it and it proved to be generally popular. I now feel that it can be used with regard even to opening suit one-bids and responses. Together with the valuation of singletons and voids, it brings all players to the same level in hand valuation as the greatest experts.

I do *not* propose that a count of honor-cards be employed on *every* hand. The advice I give you in the valuation of close hands is this:

If your hand falls short of a bid by only the margin of a plus value, count your honor-cards.

If you have six or more honor-cards in your hand, BID.

If you have fewer than six honor-cards in your hand, PASS.

To a certain extent, it may fairly be said that six honor-cards or more add a plus value to the value of a hand. Take the following examples:

1: ♠ K 9 6 5 2 *2:* ♠ K 10 9 5 3
♥ 7 5 3 ♥ Q J 7
♦ A K 6 ♦ A Q 10
♣ 6 3 ♣ 6 3

We may quite accurately say that No. 1 is worth 2½ honor-tricks, no more. Hand No. 2 is worth 2½ honor-tricks *plus,* because it contains more than six honor-cards. But on hands with five honor-tricks, which justify or almost justify a forcing bid, it is pointless to worry about counting the honor-cards. The honor-card count should be called into use to make the decision for you on doubtful opening hands, responses and raises.

Is it a lot of trouble to count honor-cards? I should hardly say so. I believe that almost any player will shortly become accustomed to notice at a glance whether his hand is plentifully supplied with honors or relatively bare of them.

In an early issue, Mr. Culbertson will disclose further new rules which apply to contract-bridge bidding of 1941 and the future.

OUR PHOTOGRAPHIC CONTEST

(Continued from page 46)

ONCE again we remind you of the rules and prizes of our new photographic contest.

Your time-limit is up to and including April 1, 1941; and the monthly prizes are: first prize for the expert's choice $25; the two second prizes, $10 each. First prize for the laymen's choice, $25; the two (or three) second prizes, $10 each. At the end of the year "the" photograph of the year will be selected by Mr. Green and will be awarded a prize of $250. The laymen will also select their picture, and that will receive $250.

If the expert and laymen should agree on the same picture, that picture will receive a double prize.

The contest is open to photographers of any country, except professionals, and employes of the McCall Corporation and their families. Submit as many pictures as you like at any one time, but pictures must have been made after April 1, 1940. Any type of camera or film, except glass-plate, is acceptable. Developing may be done by professional or entrant, but retouching or composite pictures are not permitted. Ten inches in the longest dimension is the largest size that may be submitted. Do not submit negatives. Pictures are judged solely on their general interest and appeal. The decision of the judges shall be accepted as final.

Prize-winners will be notified within ninety days of receipt of their entries. They must then submit the original negative with print, and sign a statement that the prize-winning picture has not been entered in any other contest or sold to any other publication. The winning of one prize does not preclude you from winning another.

Label each picture clearly on the back with your name and address, and date of picture. Print in ink. If you take a picture which includes a person or persons, be sure to get the name and address of each one, because if your picture wins a prize, the written consent of such persons to the use of the picture in a magazine must be obtained. All pictures should be titled, but editors may retitle or edit all prize-winners. *No print will be returned.* REDBOOK Magazine assumes no responsibility for negatives. Mail prints to Photo Editor, REDBOOK Magazine, 230 Park Avenue, New York, New York.

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An example of one such fight is Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's experience with its own family of employees.

In its campaign to stamp out tuberculosis, the Company has recognized the value of two basic activities that *every* family can practice:

1. Looking for tuberculosis among apparently healthy people.
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As a routine part of the physical examination of its employees, the Company makes regular use of the fluoroscope and the X-ray film in checking up on lungs.

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We should look for tuberculosis first among those most likely to be susceptible to the disease. Such as:

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The BLIND MAN'S HOUSE

by HUGH WALPOLE

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REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH
(CONDENSED FOR THIS PRESENTATION IN ONE ISSUE)

The BLIND MAN'S HOUSE

by HUGH WALPOLE

SHE was frightened. The fear was as sudden, and in one sense as unexpected, as an unheralded sharp stab in the breast. And yet not unexpected, because it had been hovering near her, almost out of her consciousness but not quite, for many weeks.

They were at the Crossroads. Pelynt Cross. She knew where they were, for Julius had told her, and in her hands was a map. The Crossroads. Pelynt Cross. You could smell the sea here, Julius said. She sniffed through the open window. Yes, she could smell it. On a clear day you could catch a glimpse of the sea from the Cross, which stood naked and bare on the edge of the moor. But today you could not see far, because of the summer haze which veiled the world in trembling heat.

The car had stopped for a moment while Curtis hesitated. Then he saw the finger—*"Garth in Roselands 1½ M—Rasselas 10 M."* To the left of them ran Pelynt Moor for miles and miles.

The car went on. She had taken off her hat, and the short curls of her dark hair moved in the breeze. She had thrown back her coat, and her little body drank in the heat. She loved, she *loved* the sun! She looked quickly across to Julius and then quickly back again. Was he asleep? Who could tell? His eyes were closed, but that meant nothing at all. She had been married to him for six months; and yet about a little matter like that, she could not be certain. His big body sprawled against the corner of the car. He too had taken off his hat; and his hair, so fair a yellow that in certain lights it seemed white, moved a little against his forehead.

His face, which she loved so dearly, was composed and calm. Why had she been frightened? Was it because she was coming to a new place? No. She was never frightened of a new place. She loved new places and new people, because she always conquered them with her charm. She did not pride herself on her charm. She had no conceit. But she was pleased, as anyone would be, with its effects.

Was it because her new home was his *old* home that she was frightened? No. Anything that was his was hers. He gave her everything freely, abundantly, completely. She would never feel a stranger where he was.

Was it because of herself that she was frightened?

Well, what about herself? For six months she had made Julius so happy that he told her he was "mad" with happiness. She had behaved well. She had lost her temper only twice—once with that old housekeeper, whom Julius adored so. She had forgotten engagements scarcely at all, and had shown impatience with tiresome visitors very seldom. She could not help it if she showed her feelings clearly. That was her character. She had tried in every way to make herself a good wife, and had succeeded.

Was she frightened because he was fifteen years older than she? The husband ought to be older than the wife. When Julius was sixty, she would be forty-five, an old, old woman.

Was she frightened because he had been married before? Oh, these were ancient questions! She had asked them before, and found happy answers to all of them. Wasn't Julius the kindest, noblest, most loving, most tender, most unselfish of men? Didn't she look up to him and admire him dreadfully, and didn't she, in spite of that admiration, find him a friend and a companion? Was he ever a bore? No. Never, never! Never a bore. But—

Yes, now they were coming down the hill; and that lovely wood, sparkling like a dark fire, must be the Well. Julius had told her about the Well. It was the most famous wood in all Glebeshire for primroses. They left the wood and climbed the hill, and now the salt wind from the sea really met them, fresh and taut and vigorous in spite of the blazing heat of the summer afternoon. Into endless distance now stretched the moor.

No. Julius was never a bore, but—

She heard him move, push out his great chest as though he would drink in the sea air, put his hand to his hair. His blue eyes were wide open. He smiled.

She knew why she was frightened.

On the left of them now was the square, sturdy, solitary little church, Sizyn Church, that contained the wonderful window, the "Hawthorn Window" that people came for miles to see. Julius had told her that when he was a child at Garth in Roselands, it was almost the first thing that his mother had taken him to see. He described the window to her: the masses of hawthorn blossom, the two priests, the patient donkey with the silver bells, the inscription to the dead Prior of the Franciscans.

This window had been placed in the church in the early years of Elizabeth. There had been a Trenchard in Garth House even then. She was thinking of these things, trying to arrange them in her disorderly mind, when she remembered she had promised Julius to tell him when they were passing Sizyn Church.

It was already out of sight, but he wouldn't know that, so she tugged at his sleeve.

"The Church, Julius! The Hawthorn Church! We're just passing it! You told me to tell you."

He turned upon her his sightless blue eyes.

"We *have* passed it, darling! We are going downhill again. Did you see it? Take a good look at it?"

She was beginning to be aware, ever more and more, of her uncertainty as to the sharpness of his senses. His sense of touch, his sense of smell, his sense of hearing. These were all so much stronger than her own that always when she was with him, she felt as though her hands were muffled, her nose blocked, her ears dimmed. Should he ever use these senses against her—

As it was now, he put out his big strong hand and caught her little one. She thought that she had fallen in love with

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him partly because of his hands. Large though they were, they were most beautifully shaped.

And now as his hand held hers, and his wide, staring blue eyes gazed at her, through her, beyond her, as he drew her toward him, closer and closer until her cheek and ear rested against his side, and she heard his heart claiming her with its steady possessive beat, she murmured: "Oliphant!"

Oliphant was Julius' valet, that small, active, devoted, aloof man who as yet knew so much more about Julius than she did. He was seated, very straight, beside Curtis the chauffeur.

Julius laughed.

"Oliphant is part of myself—like my waistcoat buttons." He bent down and kissed her warm sun-drenched cheek.

"Did you see the Church? Do you remember what I told you—about the window and everything?"

"Of course I remember."

His strong hand moved about her body. Because his blindness strengthened incredibly his sense of touch, she felt an especial significance when he touched her. His hand now pressed her breast through her coat; and that pressure was so strong, so certain, that she was divided, as all women of character are when a man possesses them, between joyous resignation and irritated rebellion.

"Garth in Roselands! Garth in Roselands!" he was murmuring into her ear. "Isn't it the loveliest of names? Haven't I repeated it to myself over and over again all these years I've been away!"

She gave an impatient push and separated herself from him.

"I can't be driven into Garth for the first time in my life, lying in your arms. I'm sure people are watching from every window!"

He laughed. He was so happy, and she adored him to be happy. So, at this moment, as they rode down the hill and then passed the Almshouses into Garth, she adored him *because* he was happy. She was to remember this at a later time. Nevertheless, he held her hand tightly.

"It is too fine an afternoon for them to be bothering. All the same, the Vicarage drawing-room windows look on to the village green, so there *may* be—" He stared through the window as though he could see. "Ah now, now! Soon we will be turning up the drive! In a minute we will be there!"

BEFORE the car turned from the green toward the drive beyond the little street, it was held for a moment by a big dray. While it was so held, the ladies in the Vicarage drawing-room had a fine free look, and made the very most of it.

There were four of them: Miss Vergil, Mrs. Lamplough, Miss Phyllis Larch and Mrs. Ironing. They were gathered there for the Ladies' Sewing Meeting. However, to tell the truth, on this especial afternoon very little sewing had been done, and that was partly because Mrs. Brenford, the Vicar's wife, was absent in London. It was also because, for the last hour, these ladies had been expecting the arrival of Mr. Julius Corwell and his wife, and had been eagerly on the look-out for it. It was an event of great, even supreme, importance in the village of Garth in Roselands.

Of the four ladies, Miss Vergil was the eldest and most cynical, Miss Phyllis Larch the youngest and gayest. Miss Vergil had short cropped hair, wore a hat like a gamekeeper's, a short brown jacket, a waistcoat with brass buttons and a short rough skirt. Her legs were strong and shapeless, and in her hat there was fastened a bright green and crimson fly such as fishermen use.

Miss Phyllis Larch was auburn-haired, inclining to the plump, and dressed in so flimsy a dress that even in these days it was not quite respectable. But then, Miss Larch did not care at all about being respectable. She lived with her old mother at the end of the village, drove her own car, went frequently into Polchester for parties, and was supposed to "send men mad."

Mrs. Lamplough was an old dear. She was short and plump, very like Queen Victoria in appearance, and wore bonnets and shawls. She had a soft, purring voice and was always leading people into corners for confidences.

Mrs. Ironing was the stupid member of the party. She may be said to be passing through life without understanding anything about it at all. She was a widow with a comfortable income, which was managed for her by her brother Fred Ironing, who lived on her most cheerfully and was considered by everyone to be a good, jolly fellow, and remarkably patient. Gladys Ironing was a tall, thin woman with a face like an inquiring sheep's.

These ladies were good ladies, and only one of the four had any malice in her. They were in the position of many English ladies during this period of history between 1920 and 1940. Because investments were continually going down, and because they were unfit (owing to their excellent English education) for any useful job in the world, they collected in little groups in London or provincial towns or villages, and made life as interesting as possible by taking in one another's social washing.

It is true that, in this present instance, both Mrs. Lamplough and Mrs. Ironing had ample means; but Mrs. Lamplough was not imaginatively generous, and Mrs. Ironing was not imaginatively clever, and so they stayed where they were and found it good. Miss Vergil had barely enough to pay her bills, but paid them all the same—she had an English gentleman's sense of honor. Miss Larch and her mother were moderately comfortable. These ladies, then, formed a kind of guard of honor of Mrs. Brenford, a superb woman whom they treated like a queen, as indeed she deserved to be treated.

And now the four ladies looked out the broad windows of the Vicarage, saw the Corwell car held for a moment by the dray, saw within the car the dark curly hair of Mrs. Corwell, the light-golden head of Mr. Corwell, the fine chauffeur and the neat little man beside him.

"You'd never think he was blind!" Phyllis Larch said as they turned away from the window.

CELIA CORWELL saw the house in front of her like a ship sailing through golden mist. Everything was light—even the thick rhododendrons were penetrated with light; the lawn shone like glass and the giant oak at the end of it was illuminated, every leaf a thin gold plate, and the great trunk dark with splendor. Excitement always rose in her very swiftly. She passed from mood to mood like a child: "Oh, I *will* be good! I will make them all love me! I'll never lose my temper; I'll be wise and quiet!"

She moved forward to help Julius; but Oliphant, as always, was in front of her. Julius stood for a moment breathing in the air, which was scented with hay, carnations, roses and a salt tang of the sea. His hand groped for hers. She caught it. He bent down and kissed her lightly on the cheek.

"Welcome home, my darling," he said, and they went into the house together.

The hall was long, and even on this summer's day, dark. There was a large oak chest opposite the door, and beside it a staircase with a lovely black twisted balustrade. Mrs. Gayner, the housekeeper, stood there. She was a little plump woman some sixty years of age, incredibly neat, her gray hair sleek and charming, a gold brooch fastened on to her black dress. She had been with Julius for ten years.

"How are you, Mrs. Gayner?" Celia said. Mrs. Gayner had come ahead of them to see that everything was right, to engage the maids.

"Very well, thank you, ma'am."

"That's good. Isn't it a lovely day?"

"It is indeed, ma'am. I hope you had a pleasant journey."

"Lovely! What good luck that I should see everything for the first time in such lovely weather."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Is everything all right?"

"Quite all right, ma'am. I've got two maids, and the cook is from Polchester. She's a nice woman and a good cook—at least, she promises to be."

"That's grand."

But she noticed that Mrs. Gayner's eyes looked beyond her toward her husband. That had irritated her before. It irritated her now. It was natural that Mrs. Gayner, Curtis, Oliphant, who had all been with her husband for a long time, served him, loved him, should consider him always, but was not she someone too?

"Is that Mrs. Gayner?" Julius' voice was full of happiness and joy.

"Yes sir."

He stretched out his hand and caught Mrs. Gayner's plump one.

"Everything all right?"

"Oh, yes, sir. Very satisfactory indeed."

He turned to his wife, put his arm around her waist and began slowly to mount the stairs.

"I was only in this house once. I came with my mother one time. I was about ten. Yet I remember it all. Is that oak chest still there? They told me a story that someone was caught in it once, and couldn't get out. One of those stories. It's Italian. But for the most part you'll find everything you had at Bramgrove, darling. And of course you can arrange things just as you please. The drawing-room now—it's here on the left. Everything *ought* to be just as it was at Bramgrove. Only of course the room isn't quite the same shape."

They stood in the drawing-room. It was flooded with sunlight. Celia gave a little cry, for the view from the windows was enchanting. Beyond the old stone wall that bordered the garden, fields ran down the hill to a straggling wood, then slightly up again to a level horizon, and above this was a line of sea, now one stroke of trembling gold. In the fields were old trees, set deep into the soil, and under their cool soft shadow cows were lying. The windows were open, and the sea breeze blew, very delicately, the fawn-colored curtains.

All the Bramgrove things were here: the water-colors that her father had collected—Wilson and Colman and David Cox; the sofa chairs with their pale primrose chintz; the piano; the oil-painting of Julius as a young soldier, just before he went to the war where he was blinded.

She raised herself a little, caught Julius around the neck and kissed him again and again.

"Oh, Julius, we're going to be happy here! I know we are. It's a lovely house! I'll do everything—everything!"

She was crying. He felt the salt on her cheek as he kissed it.

LATER they went together to their bedroom. There was nothing that she loved better than this leading him through strange places. She felt now his utter dependence upon her. He leaned against her, holding her tightly to him. His blue eyes stared without winking, and he moved, step after step rather as a walker on a tight-rope does. She felt then that his whole body belonged to her.

They stood in the bedroom enwrapped in one another's arms, the sunlight bathing them.

There was a knock on the door. It was Curtis in his chauffeur's uniform, looking so smart, so official, so impersonal, that Celia turned away. Curtis was all right, but just then she didn't want to see him. And of course there was already something important that Julius must go and settle. They had not been in the house five minutes. It was always so.

"Come down as soon as you've washed, darling, and we'll have tea in the garden. Under the oak."

He put his hand through Curtis' arm, and went away.

She looked at herself in the glass. Very small she was; but her figure, for her size, was perfect. She looked like a boy in girl's clothes, perhaps—but no, her coloring, her small breasts, her beautiful arms and hands, could never belong to a boy. She raised her arms above her head, breathing with happiness and pleasure. She began to dance about the room, moving most gracefully in the sunlight, and the room reflected her in her pale dress, with her dark hair, her big excited eyes.

"This *will* do! This *will* do! The loveliest place I've ever known."

There was again a knock on the door. The maid came in, a pretty, tall girl with brown hair.

"I've come, ma'am, to unpack."

"Oh, yes—but never mind just now. I'm going down to tea. You can unpack then."

"Yes ma'am."

"What's your name?"

"Violet."

"Violet—that's a nice name. Where do you come from?"

"Oh, I was born in London, ma'am. But five years ago I went to service with Mrs. Ironing—Mrs. Ironing of Cumberleigh, ma'am."

"Oh, yes. And Mrs. Gayner stole you from her?"

"Oh, no, ma'am. There were reasons. I had left—"

"I see. I'm sure we will be friends."

Celia smiled, and Violet smiled too. They *were* friends already.

Violet departed. Celia looked out of the window and saw tea being laid under the oak tree.

When she was ready to go, she knelt beside the bed and prayed. She didn't know whether she believed in prayers, but they gave you a comfortable feeling as though someone very strong put his arm around you and told you you need not fear.

Why had she been afraid in the car? She had forgotten why. How foolish! There was no reason for any fear.

She rushed down the stairs, crying out: "Julius! Julius!"

ACROSS the village green the light had mellowed, sinking into every blade of grass, then soaking the soil like wine. The sky above Mr. Boss the Butcher, Mrs. Irwin the postmistress, Teak—Stationer and Bookseller, and the Methodist Chapel, was of a blue so magnificently self-satisfied that only one small ragged cloud, urchin and homeless, dared to cock at it a streaming finger.

The four ladies were gathered about the table.

Mrs. Ironing smiled brightly about her. It was one of her irritating traits that she should be so bright as well as so stupid. She said now, with a kind of gurgle because she was biting her thread:

"I expect there are compensations in being blind."

"Oh, yes, Gladys dear," Miss Vergil in her deep, booming voice replied. "Just as it is the best luck in the world to have no roof to your mouth, and there's *nothing* so lucky as being born with one leg shorter than the other!"

"Oh, do you think so?" said Mrs. Ironing happily. "I should regard it as most unfortunate to have no roof—"

"Hell!" Miss Vergil cried, abruptly rising. "I can't stand this any longer. To be blind! My God! And to come back to the very place you were in as a boy when you could see."

"At any rate," Mrs. Lamplough murmured, purring like a little kettle, "he's got a young wife—years younger than himself—to lead him about. I hear from someone who lived quite near their place in Wiltshire that she's very undependable."

"What do you mean, Alice?" Miss Vergil said sharply. "Undependable?"

"Oh, I don't mean anything except that she's *very* young for her years, and loses her temper in public, and then apologizes in public too, which is so very embarrassing. Then she's fifteen years younger than her husband, which is quite a lot. They say she likes young men's company; and that, after all, is quite natural."

"Certainly," said Gladys Ironing. "I like young men much better than old ones, just as Fred likes young girls—"

This was interrupted by hearty laughter from everybody, and Gladys opened her mouth and stared and rubbed her nose and said:

"Well, I really don't know what I've said—"

Ten minutes later May Vergil and Phyllis Larch were alone in the room. They moved toward the door.

"I meant what I said," May Vergil said. "To be blind—in this weather. To be married to someone years younger! Isn't life awful, Phil? Intolerable! Oh no, of course you don't find it so. There are always men around, aren't there? Men! What a lot! However, I won't start that again."

"Did you see her?" Phyllis Larch asked. "In the car, I mean. Wasn't she lovely? With that dark curly head? Isn't it funny to think he's never *seen* her? Held her in his arms and all that, but never *seen* her?"

Chapter Two

THE REVEREND MARK BRENFORD, vicar of the parish of Garth in Roselands in the county of Glebeshire, was, quite possibly, the handsomest clergyman in the whole of England, and quite certainly the laziest.

His hair was thick on his head, and snow white, although he was but sixty years of age. He had the face of an esthetic poet of the Nineteen Hundreds, a figure supple and erect, and a voice, as Phyllis Larch said, filled with "organ notes." His charm too was beautiful, and although he never did anything for any man, woman or child in the village, save when nature, by bringing to birth or urging to matrimony or slaying in due time, forced him, he was everywhere popular because he never interfered with anyone or anything, was shocked by nothing and nobody, and laughed so infectiously.

He conducted as few of the church services as possible and left a great deal to his red-haired kindly curate Mr. Townley. Strange it was that he had not even any hobbies. He liked a novel in front of the fire, a drive in the little family Austin, food, drink and a pretty woman, although his morals were irreproachable.

Now oddly enough his wife, Daisy Brenford, was also a beauty. Phyllis called her once "a Juno in the cornfield," and although this meant really nothing at all, everyone liked and repeated it. She was a tall, big, full-breasted woman with masses of corn-colored hair, which was piled in old-fashioned style on the top of her head and braided above her temples. She wore clothes in bright gay colors that fitted her closely, so that her bosom, her thighs, were handsomely defined.

This magnificent pair had three children: Dorothy, Gilbert and Simon. Dorothy was aged seventeen, Gilbert fourteen, Simon eight. Gilbert was at school at Polchester but was at present home for the holidays. These children were very unsophisticated and unmodern. They had all been born in the Garth Vicarage, and until Gilbert had gone to boarding-school, none of them had been away from there except to the Glebeshire seaside on expeditions.

They had mingled with the village children quite happily. They had known a number of governesses, but unhappily the best of these, Miss Fritch, departed after a quarrel with Mrs. Brenford, a mysterious quarrel because only Mrs. Brenford gave any account of it and from this it was clear that Miss Fritch had been quite impossible.

No governess succeeded Miss Fritch. Gilbert went to school, and Mrs. Brenford taught Dorothy, and Dorothy taught Simon. At least, that was the idea.

The three children adored their father, who never denied them anything; they thought their mother wonderful.

They had, however, none of the experiences of good modern children. They had never been given handsome toys, nor been taken to the theater, nor learned of the troubles and perplexities of the mature from the lips of the mature. Dorothy was tall and slim, with as honest a face as a human face can be. Gilbert was slim, pale and inclined to take things seriously. Simon was short and thick and led a very intense life of his own.

IT was three days after the arrival of the Corwells; the children had just finished tea, and Lucy, the maid of all possible and impossible work, was clearing away the tea. When Lucy was gone, Gilbert suddenly said:

"I want something frightfully."

Dorothy, who was gulping down "Chicot the Jester" as though he were a life-restorer and turning one ear to Simon, who was telling a story both to her and himself, said, rather impatiently: "What do you want?" She knew that in five minutes' time they must go down to the drawing-room to spend half an hour with their mother, and she wanted to reach the end of her chapter.

Gilbert, standing straight in front of her, his eyes fixed anxiously on her face, told her.

"Well, you see, there's an awfully decent chap called Peabley. I like him better than anyone else at school—in fact, I like him awfully. His people have taken a house for the summer just outside Rasselas—on the cliff; and he wants me to go on Tuesday and spend the day with them. And I can take a bus. It's quite all right, but Tuesday's the only day. They go back to Polchester on Thursday."

"Which day did you say?" asked Dorothy.

"Tuesday."

"But that's the day Mother said she might take us into Polchester."

"I know—that's the awful part."

They looked at one another. She had forgotten "Chicot" and Simon. Here was a real trouble. Gilbert so very seldom said that he wanted anything; when he did, it was serious. They were devoted. Gilbert, in spite of his time at school, still thought that Dorothy could settle every difficulty, that she was the wisest, most far-seeing person in the world.

Dorothy on her side was aware that Gilbert was more sensitive than the others, felt things more severely and for a longer time. Her feeling over him was, although she did not know it, partly maternal.

"You see," Gilbert went on, "it isn't as though Mother could go *only* on that day. She said she had several days to choose from. And it's the *only* day for the Peableys."

"Yes. But—" Dorothy looked anxious.

Simon suddenly said from the floor:

"Dorothy and me saw the blind man this morning."

She raised her head and looked at the schoolroom window which a thin weeping rain was misting. It had been clear but not sunny this morning when, coming out of the stationer's with Simon, she had seen Mr. Corwell and his wife walking across the green. He had his arm in hers. He walked, his head very erect, staring straight in front of him and talking all the time. He had a most pleasant smile. She had told Simon that he couldn't see.

"Why can't he see?" Simon asked her.

"He was hit with a bullet in the War."

"He can't see the teeniest, teeniest thing?"

"No. Nothing."

At the same moment she had seen the postman going to the Vicarage gate. He must have had the letter for Gilbert.

It seemed to her now as though that had been a dramatic moment—the blind man and the letter for Gilbert.

"I'm going to ask Mother."

"Yes, of course."

"If I tell her it's the only day—"

"Don't make her feel we don't *want* to go with her to Polchester."

"No. Of course not."

"We'd better go down. It's time."

Simon got up from the floor. He enjoyed going down to the drawing-room. He enjoyed practically everything except cold fat, barking dogs, and women who kissed him.

"Here. Let me brush your hair."

He had a lot of light brown hair that would, unless he was careful, fall over his forehead into his eyes. One of his most characteristic gestures was tossing his hair back from his eyes. Then he was like a little pony stamping.

He slept in a room with Gilbert, and into that they now went. He stood grinning while Dorothy brushed his hair. He looked so pleasant, so independent and sturdy in his blue smock, that Dorothy would have kissed him had she not known how greatly he disliked it.

He rushed down the stairs, crying out: "Mum—Mum—Mum."

However, when they reached the drawing-room, only their father was there.

"Father, there's a boy called Peabley at school, and his people have asked me to spend next Tuesday at Rasselas with them. Do you think I can?"

"Why, of course, certainly. Do you good."

"The only thing is, Father," Dorothy said, "Mother said she'd take us into Polchester next Tuesday to see about Gillie's new suit."

"Your mother can take you another day."

"Oh, Father, do you think she can?"

It was as though little fires had suddenly been lit in Gilbert's eyes.

"Certainly. Of course."

"Where's Mother?" Dorothy asked.

"She's been out to tea with Mrs. Lamplough. Should be back any moment."

He stretched himself and yawned.

"I must be off to work. Work, work, work—nothing but work!" He grinned at Simon. "Your old father is a slave—a slave to duty. Aren't you sorry for him?"

But Simon was considering something else.

"I saw a man who was blind this morning. He couldn't see anything, not the teeniest thing."

But his father was gone.

Gilbert was greatly excited.

"Did you hear what Father said? He said that of course she would."

Dorothy shook her head. "Father often says things without thinking. And then he forgets that he's said them."

"All the same, he's quite right. It can't matter to Mother which day it is."

MRS. BRENFORD came in. She was wearing a pale blue dress with a white rose pinned at her waist. She looked lovely and was a little cross. However, she took them all with her to the sofa, threw her hat on the floor, stretched her length, gathering them all about her.

"Oh, you darlings! You darlings! I ought to have told you I'd be out. You've had your tea? Yes. That's right. Oh, dear, how tired I am, and what a day! We were to have had tea in the garden, and of course it rained, so

there we were all crowded into the drawing-room, and such a noise—my head's simply splitting. What do you say, Simon pet? You saw a blind man with Dorothy? Oh, you mean you were *with* Dorothy when you saw a blind man. And now tell me what you've all been doing, because I've *such* a headache I shall go straight up to my room and lie down. Yes, Gillie, tell me everything. What do you say? You had a letter? When? This morning? Who are they? Peabley? Never heard of them."

Gilbert stood in front of her as though he were reciting a lesson.

"Peabley's father's a canon. He's awfully decent; so's Mrs. Peabley. They've taken a house at Rasselas for the summer—on the cliff. Well, they want me to go on Tuesday for the whole day. There's the nine o'clock bus, and one comes back at six. Can I, Mother? Can I?"

"*What's* the name of these people?"

"Peabley."

Dorothy knew from his breathing that he was growing more desperate with every moment.

"But *I* don't know them. What day do you say it is?"

"Tuesday."

"On Tuesday! That settles it. We're going into Polchester that day. You've got to have your suit fitted."

THERE was a short pause. Gilbert was heaving up his determination.

"But Mother, Father says I can go."

("Oh," thought Dorothy, "that's a mistake!")

"Your father! What's *he* got to do with it?"

"He said you might go another day."

At this his mother sat up, patting at her golden braids with her large strong hand.

"My *dear* Gillie! You want to go, do you? More than you want to come with your mother! That isn't very kind."

"No. It's not that. Of course I want to come with you."

"Every mother must expect to lose her son. She is everything to him while he needs her, but the moment he can fend for himself, the mother is set aside—"

Gilbert, white of face, holding his small thin body rigidly together, moistening his lower lip with his tongue, burst out: "Oh, Mother, do let me go! It isn't that I don't want to go to Polchester. Of course I do, just as I always did. But we can go on Friday. If you let me go to Rasselas on Tuesday I'll be ever so good. You see, it means *everything,* because if Peabley's my friend next term I can get on ever so fast with math and geography; and next term's rugger, and I'm not much good, that's *quite* certain, but Peabley's most awfully good, and he'll show me a lot of things."

He paused, breathless, his eyes shining with hope. His mother looked at him with tenderness.

"My dear Gillie, you've hurt me not a little. When you're older, you'll understand. You are all I have, you and Dorothy and Simon. It's quite natural that you should want to leave me for perfect strangers. Quite natural. But it hurts me all the same. You shall go into Rasselas on Tuesday, and you shall have the suit fitted later. I'm sorry. It isn't kind—" Her lower lip quivered.

Gilbert looked at her. "I didn't want to hurt you."

"No, I'm sure you didn't."

Mother and son looked at one another. Then Gilbert turned and, with his head down, like an animal butting, ran from the room.

Mrs. Brenford sighed and lay back against the cushions. But her repose was not for long.

The door most unexpectedly opened, and in came Mr. Brenford. With him a lady. The lady was short but not stout, gray hair under her hat, brown eyes, very quietly dressed. All this Daisy Brenford, who was no fool, at once took in. She rose from the sofa. Simon rose from the floor. Dorothy stayed where she was.

"My dear," Mark Brenford said, "I have brought someone in for a moment whom I want you to know. This is Mrs. Mark."

Mrs. Brenford, entirely bewildered, stepped forward. The little lady smiled and they shook hands.

Brenford went on: "That will mean nothing to you, but it *will* mean something when I tell you that Mrs. Mark's maiden name was Trenchard, and that she was born in the House and lived there most of her time until she was married. She knows every turn and twist of *this* house, by the way."

They had sat down by now, Mrs. Brenford and Mrs. Mark side by side on the sofa.

"I really ought to apologize—" Mrs. Mark began. She had a soft gentle voice.

"Oh, but I'm delighted!"

"The fact is, I've never come back to Garth all these years! More than thirty years. I haven't dared. I was so happy here, but my husband didn't like it. So, until his death, I stayed away. He died three years ago and since then I've been trying to pluck up my courage and face my memories. And now I've taken Copley's Cottage at the end of the village for a month or two."

"How very charming!" Mrs. Brenford murmured. "We shall be neighbors. You must find a lot of changes."

"I don't know yet. I've only been here three days. But I don't think I shall—not externally, at any rate." She smiled and looked across at Dorothy for the first time with a friendly glance.

"I was born in the House. We all were. And now I'm the only one left. My father and mother died long ago. I'm sixty, you know! My sister Millie died five years ago, and my brother Henry was killed in a motor accident. You probably read about it at the time. He was quite famous as a dramatist."

"Why, of course. Henry Trenchard. How sad that was!"

"And so you see why I've dreaded coming back. I'm not quite alone in the world. I have a son who's an astronomer. Isn't that an odd thing to be? But he's married now and so—well, here I am!"

Her confidences were so quiet and so simple that no one felt it at all strange that she should tell them these things.

"And so you knew this house quite well?"

"Oh, very well—as well as our own. The clergyman at that time—just before I married—was—"

Mark Brenford said: "You know that some new people have taken the House."

"Yes," said Mrs. Mark. "They arrived, I believe, the same day as I did."

"He was blinded, poor man, in the War," Mrs. Brenford said. "This is his second wife, and she's years younger. He's got plenty of money, I believe."

"I hope I shall meet them. I do want to see the House again."

"Of course you will. Won't you have some tea?"

"No, thank you. I must be going." She rose. "Your husband found me in the church and insisted on bringing me in."

"I'm so glad."

But there was to be yet one more interruption: The window that led to the lawn opened. They all turned.

A young man stood there. He was dressed in rather dirty flannels; he was as brown as a chestnut; his hair stood up above his ears; he was very good-looking. He looked at them with an amused and rather cheeky greeting. "Hullo!" he said, and was gone the moment after, leaving the window open behind him.

"Good heavens!" Brenford cried. "That was Jim Burfer."

"He's back again!" Daisy Brenford said.

"How like him!" said Brenford. He went to the window and called: "Jim! *Jim!*"

But there was not a sign of him in the warm misty rain.

Brenford said to Mrs. Mark: "Now isn't that just like him? He used to help Fred Ironing— Oh, but you don't know, of course. A wild young fellow. We all liked him. He's been away two years. I wonder what he's back for."

He closed the window: Mrs. Mark made her farewells.

Chapter Three

DEAR ALICE:

I should have answered your letter ever so long back, but the fact is, I've been so terribly busy that I've hardly known whether I'm on my head or my heels. Well, Alice, you know I always tell you everything, and what's a loving sister for if you don't; but the fact is, I'm writing this very letter in a bit of a tremble, and the reason is that only a quarter of an hour ago Mrs. Corwell's been in here and lost her temper in a shocking fashion. Of course I never said a word, as where would I be by now if I hadn't learned to control my tem-

per, besides which I can't help liking her. She's only a child when all is said and done. Besides, as you well know, I'd do any mortal thing for him and well he knows it. Besides, Alice, he loves her something terrible and so does she, but she doesn't understand him one little bit nor what it is to be blind, although she *wants* to understand if you get me.

She's a grown woman and she's no right to get in the states she does. I don't think she's happy and that's the cause of a lot of it. She comes in just now and asks me why the letters haven't gone to the post. That's not my business, as she well knows, but Curtis the chauffeur's, but I not wanting to put the blame on Curtis, say I'll see to it, and then she's in a rage and flings out of the room banging the door just like a naughty child.

You know what it is, Alice, she's jealous, poor thing. Jealous of me and Curtis and especially of Oliphant—anyone her husband has a kind word for. I think she's frightened of his blindness, not realizing it at first, but thinking she'd have all the more power with him because he *was* blind, and now finding that he seems to get away from her where she can't get after him.

I know what you're asking all the time, Alice—how's *he* getting along? Well, I've never seen him so happy, never, and it does your heart good to hear him humming to himself and laughing, and kissing her when he thinks there isn't anyone there. It *ought* to be all right when two people are as much in love with one another as those two are, but she's restless all the same, jealous one minute and flirting with someone the next. She doesn't mean any harm, you know, but there's something in him she's frightened of and not at ease with, and there's a sort of relief and ease comes over her when she's found someone her own age who isn't blind and can see just what *she* sees.

We've had a lot of people calling, and the vicar and his wife. They're a handsome pair if you like, with three nice children, but she's struck on herself and her fine appearance if you want my opinion.

I have only one trouble as you know, Alice, and a grievous trouble it is, but not one word have I had although I've written three times to the address he gave, and I really don't know what to think. Write soon.

Your loving sister
Elizabeth Gayner.

LIZZIE GAYNER finished her letter with a sigh and sighed again as she licked it, sealed it up. Alice Fisher, housekeeper to an old Mrs. Nutting in St. John's Wood, London, was her only sister. They knew everything about one another. Alice knew Lizzie's one great secret.

If it were not for one constant gnawing anxiety, Lizzie would be a happy and contented woman. She had had now, for ten years, a perfect place and a perfect master. The coming of this second wife, Mrs. Corwell, could not make any difference at all. She, Lizzie Gayner, would make a friend of this Mrs. Corwell before all was over. You see!

There was a knock on the door. Lizzie opened it, and there before her was Julius Corwell. She took him by the hand and led him to the best chair. He sank down into it, crossing his big legs, folding his hands after straightening his black tie. He looked, she thought, splendid in his evening clothes—a proper gentleman if there ever was one.

"That's right, Lizzie. Thank you. I haven't been in here before."

"No sir."

"I thought I'd come in here for a little talk."

"Yes sir. I'm very pleased, sir, I'm sure, sir."

"How have you been getting on?"

"Very well, I think, sir. The new maids seem quite all right. I hope the cooking's satisfactory."

"Very good indeed."

He paused. He seemed to be staring at her with his blue eyes as though he saw straight into her very soul. She remembered how, years ago, this intense gaze had frightened her. How much did he see? How much did he really know?

"Do you know one odd thing, Lizzie? Every new house I live in, I seem to be able to see farther than in the last one. Oh, not really, of course! But we've been in three now, haven't we? You came to us first in Eastwood, didn't you? I remember that first day so well. I got Elinor to describe you. 'She's short and round and very tidy and has a *good* face!' That's what she said."

They both laughed.

"Very complimentary of Mrs. Corwell, I'm sure," said Lizzie.

"Yes. You liked her, didn't you? Always. You never had a row."

"Not a single one, sir."

"And when she was ill, you were wonderful. She always said that you made all the difference."

"I'm very glad of that, sir."

"Yes. And she still seems to be with me. I'm not a spiritualist, you know; but when you're blind, you live in another world. It's easier to imagine that someone's not really dead. Isn't it queer to think that I never saw her! What do you remember now best about her—physically, I mean?"

"Well, sir, she was tall and carried herself beautifully. But what I remember best was her face—the calmness and goodness of it. She was a saint if there ever was one!"

"Yes, she was. She was never angry, never impatient, never in a hurry. And in all that suffering at the end, she never complained once. And yet she wasn't a prig. She had a great sense of humor. I never felt dependent on her, and yet I knew everything was all right if she was there."

HE paused again, puffing at his pipe. Lizzie Gayner sat upright, sometimes smoothing her black silk dress with her hand.

"You know, Lizzie, the odd thing is, the blindness doesn't get any easier with the passing of time."

"I'm sorry to hear that, sir."

"Oh, of course the earlier difficulties are gone. I don't rebel and curse and swear as I once did. I've resigned myself. But the calm I ought to find: it doesn't come."

"It will, sir, God helping you."

"I don't know. When you can see, you know what's real. When you can't, reality and unreality mix." He pulled himself up. "But now I'm getting dismal, and I'm most awfully happy just now. Only, I like talking to you. I always did. There wasn't anyone I could talk to in the same way, even Elinor."

"I'm very glad, and honored too."

"Yes, it's because everything with you is so straight and simple. You believe in God and trust Him. You do your job and your duty. And that's all. You haven't a complication in your life, have you?"

How far could he see? What did he mean by that question? She didn't answer him, and he went on:

"We're such wonderful friends. I can tell you anything, and know you'll be wise about it." He sat up; he caught his knee with one hand.

"Lizzie, I'm so terribly, so fearfully in love!"

"Yes sir. I know you are, sir."

He seemed now to be engaged in some terrible struggle with himself. She watched his face, yearning to help him, striving, with all that she had in her, to help him.

"There are things I suppose a man should always keep to himself. Englishmen especially think it wrong. But we've been close friends for ten years, haven't we?"

"Yes sir. I'm proud to say we have."

"You're the only human being alive now who knew both Elinor and myself as we were truly together."

"Yes sir."

"You know how devoted we were, what a grand, fine human being she was, so much finer than myself. You know how lost I was after she went. You comforted me as no one else did."

"I did my best, sir."

"And so, Lizzie, you can understand better than anyone else what it means when I say that I never knew what love really was before I met my present wife. I don't know what it is now. I'm making new discoveries every day. And—listen to this, Lizzie, mark it, put it deep in your mind—if ever I have regretted being blind, if ever I have agonized over it, and cursed it, and regretted it, I'm cursing and regretting it now. I told you just now that the cursing part of it was over long ago. Well, it's all come back. I love her so terribly, Lizzie, and I can't see her, I can't tell where she goes to, I don't know what she's doing. She may be making faces at me, for all I know!"

"She loves you, sir, quite as much as you love her. I'm sure of it."

"Then listen to this: Two nights ago I woke up. Our beds are so close that I can reach out with my hand and

make sure that she's there. I reached out my hand, and she wasn't there. I heard her laughing somewhere in the room. She said: 'You were snoring, so I woke you up.' I asked her to come back, but she wouldn't. She said: 'I'm going—I'm going—I'm gone.' Then I got out of bed to find her, but of course, I couldn't. She turned on the light—I could feel it against my eyes—but she wouldn't let me find her. Then I barked my shin against a chair, and at once she was in my arms, crying. Crying, Lizzie! Swearing that she loved me, that she loved me so terribly, but I didn't love her and liked Oliphant better—nonsense, nonsense—and I had to take her in my arms and console her, and she went to sleep—"

He was shaking from head to foot, trembling. His blind eyes were closed.

"I know how it is, sir," Mrs. Gayner said. "You haven't been married long enough. They always say the first year is difficult for anybody, getting to know one another and fitting in. Then she's only a child, if I may say so. She's never been married before, and you have. She's ready to try any trick to be sure of you. It's not being sure of you, sir, makes her temperamental."

"Do you think I'm too old for her, Lizzie?"

"Why, no sir. What's fifteen years, when all's said and done?"

"She lost her temper with you this very evening, didn't she?"

"She *was* in a bit of an upset."

"She came and told me. She said, 'Julius, I've been misbehaving,' just like a child. She was very sorry."

"Oh, that was nothing, sir. She'll get to know me in time. We'll be great friends before the year's out."

He got up, and she rose too, and began to lead him toward the door.

"Bless you, Lizzie. You're right as usual. Only, I'm not wise enough. That's the trouble. When you're in love, it isn't so easy!"

He sighed and stood still.

"By the way, I've taken on someone else. A young gentleman called Burfer."

"Yes sir."

"He was with the Ironings. He went away, and now he's come back again. Ironing says he's a marvel about the house, in the garden, everywhere. A bit wild, but I liked his voice. He came to see me and told me all about himself. He wants little more than his keep. He'll help Cotterill in the garden and do odd jobs generally. He's the son of a clergyman, Ironing says, and went to Cambridge. He knows shorthand, can type and, Ironing says, is sober and honest. But he can't stick anywhere for long. He'll disappear one day without a word to anyone. Be decent to him. I know you will. I liked his voice—the timbre of it."

"Yes sir."

He said good-night, and for an instant put his arm around her.

Chapter Four

BY Sizyn Church there is a very old wall. It runs straight across the moor until it reaches another wall, a very modern one which Frank Partridge of Sizyn Farm helped to make with his own strong hands. But the wall by the church is very, very old—Thirteenth Century, they say, although nobody really knows. Some who have been up very early in the morning or have passed that way as evening light is fading, say that they have seen a donkey close to the wall, cropping at the grass—a ghost-donkey, of course. It is said that you can walk right through it. The donkey, they say, belonged to the Franciscan who designed the famous Hawthorn Window early in Queen Elizabeth's reign—so early that there were still Franciscans to be found wandering the country.

In any case, that part of the moor is a haunted place, for behind Sizyn Farm is the oak-tree where the young lady hanged herself in Monmouth's time because she was going to have a baby. And there are the Crazy Stones, eight of them, in a half-circle, on the projecting spike of moor above the wood known as the Well, and nobody knows how old *they* are! And at the Crossroads themselves, on the Garth-in-Roselands—Rafiel Road, they say that the Highwayman of Charles the Second's time, whose treasure is supposed to be hidden somewhere on the moor, was buried with a stake through his heart. Across this moor the English marched to defend their country against the Spaniards, to fight for Cromwell, to die for Monmouth, to challenge the French in 1812—yes, and many, many marches before those days. We can see them, horde upon horde of naked men and women driven like cattle, the hide-whips of the Danes whistling in the air above them. Through it all the moor is unchanged, the tough little grasses blowing, the sea-birds screaming against the sun even as they are today.

For it is a fine day, and everyone is thankful—Mr. and Mrs. Corwell, Mrs. Brenford and her children Dorothy, Gilbert and Simon, Mr. and Mrs. Lamplough, Miss Vergil, Mrs. Ironing and Fred Ironing her brother, Miss Phyllis Larch, Oliphant, Curtis and Jim Burfer—all, all are thankful that it is a fine day.

For what is a picnic when it rains, or worse than that, when the sea-mist comes up, as on the Glebeshire coast it does so often, and veils the world in water.

THE cars drove up the hill and stopped near the church. It was a day of a pale lighted sky, warm in sunshine, the faint odorous chill of approaching autumn in the shadow. The line of sea stretched milk-white against the blue-white sky.

Out they all tumbled: Julius and Celia from one car, Mrs. Brenford, Dorothy, Gilbert and Simon from another, Mr. and Mrs. Lamplough with Miss Vergil from a third, Mrs. Ironing, her brother Fred, and Mrs. Mark from a fourth, Phyllis Larch and her old mother from a fifth. After them came Oliphant, Curtis and Jim Burfer bearing baskets.

The children ran ahead. Julius Corwell was led slowly forward by Oliphant.

"Now, don't take your coat off, Alice. This time of the year it's most treacherous."

Little Mrs. Lamplough, who had no intention of taking her coat off and knew exactly always what she intended to do, murmured to Phyllis: "I do think it was very strange of Mr. Corwell to engage that Burfer boy. Everyone knows the things he did when he was with the Ironings. To be with someone who's *blind* must always have been his dearest wish."

"He's very good-looking," Phyllis said with a sigh.

They found a perfect site, almost under the church wall and yet in the sunshine.

"I think," said Celia, "that we'll have lunch at once. It's almost one o'clock, and I know I'm fearfully hungry."

"Oh, yes! Oh, yes!" everyone cried, all except Gabriel Lamplough, who began to wander away with a vague independence.

They were all conscious of Julius. A blind man made an unexpected difference. There he was, his big body planted against the wall, his long legs stuck out, his blue eyes staring into space, his hands folded, saying nothing, but a queer secret little smile on his lips. Mrs. Mark was seated beside him.

"Did you come up here often when you were a boy?" she said. "We came very seldom. My mother for some reason disliked the moor. She forbade us to come here alone even when we were quite old."

Julius turned his face toward her.

"I was always coming here. Catsholt was no distance. I loved this church. . . . But tell me—is the House dreadfully changed? Have we ruined it?"

"Oh, no, it's ever so much more beautiful than when we were there, although of course I don't like it nearly so much. In our day it was filled with odds and ends, old things that were of no use, but that nobody could bear to destroy."

"It must have been an exciting moment, the first time you saw it again."

"Yes." Her voice dropped. "I stood in the door out of which my husband and I eloped. It was a wild stormy evening, but I remember there was one brilliant star shining between the clouds. Just before I left, I met my brother Harry on the stairs; and he, thinking I was just going to the village, said, 'You'll be late for dinner,' which was an awful crime in those days. I said, 'No, I won't. I shall hurry.' I wanted to kiss him, but didn't, and I ran out. I eloped because Phillip and my mother didn't agree. They were both domineering people."

"It seems to be," Julius said, "a house in which things happen."

"Yes, I think it is." She added quietly: "I do hope, Mr. Corwell, you'll be very happy there. Mrs. Corwell is so charming. I like her already so very much."

"Thank you. She likes you, too. You can be a good friend to her, Mrs. Mark, if you will. She's younger than her age in some ways. I want our marriage to be simply perfect!" He laughed. "I suppose no marriage is that. You see, Mrs. Mark, I'm blind, and fifteen years older than my wife. Do you think we can be companions in everything?"

"Yes—if you are both patient and both unselfish. Trouble often comes, I think, from trying to make someone you love the same as yourself. It's the differences between you that give life to the companionship."

The food was spread. Oliphant came over and touched his master on the shoulder and said: "Luncheon is ready, sir!" Celia stood, waving her hand. "Come on, everybody! Time for food!"

As the meal proceeds, they all feel a little queer—queer not from the food and drink. Oh, no! But they are being fed by a blind man. Soon they will be accustomed to him, of course. But will they? Won't he always be outside their world, reminding them of more worlds than their own, worlds more dangerous, worlds leading to other worlds?

Phyllis Larch couldn't take her eyes off him and yet didn't wish to be looking at him. May Vergil's eyes were always on *her,* and May could be so very sarcastic and beastly! Moreover, she must think of her old mother, who, sunk into her old furs, her hat a little askew, her bony brown fingers clutching at the food, looked more like a monkey than many monkeys look.

Phyllis, the young child of her middle years, hissed at her: "Do sit up straight, Ma, for heaven's sake, do."

It was at this moment that Mrs. Brenford felt that she was being left out of it, and this feeling led, in the end, to unfortunate consequences. On such slender threads do human fortunes hang. Had Phyllis Larch attended, at that moment, to Daisy Brenford instead of to her old mother, the lives of several persons might have been different.

For Daisy Brenford was accustomed to worship. She was not getting it. Why? Because little Mrs. Corwell, in her dark hat with the red feather, was dominating the scene. True, it was her party, but need May Vergil and Phyllis Larch and the Lamploughs and Fred Ironing all behave as though they had never seen a pretty woman in their lives before?

As a matter of record, Daisy Brenford did not care at all for that childish girlish figure, that excited laugh, that obvious courting of anybody's favor! Cheap! That was what Celia Corwell was! No dignity. No sense of a married woman's proper behavior!

So she was angry, and looked about her, and saw that no one was paying her any attention; and from that moment, she began to dislike Celia Corwell very much indeed.

The Brenford children had eaten their fill. Simon, who was a realist, had eaten more than his fill, but he had a stomach that was his true friend, accommodating and adventurous like himself.

Celia Corwell jumped up, waved a knife and cried: "Who's going to cut the cake?" He could scarcely believe his ears when she went on: "You're the youngest, Simon! You must cut it! We'll do it together!"

Jim Burfer brought her the cake. Simon knelt on the grass beside her, and she guided his hand. She smelled of violets. He cut down into the cake with ferocity. He would show them! It was an enormous piece, and was divided on a plate. Then he murmured, so that no one else could hear:

"Can I have a little soldier?"

He had been told again and again never to ask for anything; but when he wanted something, he got it. "Of course," she said, quite practically. She gave him the soldier, and miraculously, did not kiss him. From that moment he was her devoted slave.

"You mustn't let him bother you, dear Mrs. Corwell."

"Oh, he doesn't a bit."

"WELL, what do you think of him, Fred?" said May Vergil, smoking a little cheroot and watching Phyllis Larch. Fred Ironing was a big fat jolly man, who must either kill some animal or kiss some woman if life were to have any kind of flavor.

"Him? Who?" he asked.

"Who? . . . Why, Julius Corwell, of course."

"Well, I think it's very decent of him to give us all such a grand meal!"

"Oh, that, of course! No—idiot! What sort of a man do you think he is? Is he a fool, or isn't he?"

"I suppose he's like the rest of us—sometimes a fool, sometimes not such a fool. For instance, he's a fool for one thing because he's taken Jim Burfer to work for him. I could have told him a thing or two about Jim Burfer, but he didn't ask me. All he asked me was whether he was industrious. Industrious! I should say!" Fred Ironing grinned.

"Oh, you mean he's always after girls!"

"*And* some! However, that's Corwell's affair. Only, he must be a simple, trusting kind of chap."

CELIA looked around her. She wanted passionately that Julius and she should go alone into the church.

Mrs. Brenford was seated with her back to them, queening it with Phyllis, Miss Vergil and Mrs. Lamplough. No one observed them. She took his arm, and they slipped round the corner, pushed their way through the little door and sat down on one of the old benches.

The sun was shining fiercely behind the Hawthorn Window. The fierce white of the hawthorn blossom, the brilliant green of the grass, the purple that colored the name of the prior to whom the window was dedicated, burned brilliantly as though the old glass were beaten into the air that was sunflamed. The little church wrapped them round with friendliness. They sat close together, hand in hand.

"The sun is shining behind the window," Celia said. "It makes the colors very brilliant."

"It was the first colored window I ever saw," Julius said. "As a little boy, my mother brought me the first time here. I thought the figures of the monk and the donkey were alive."

"They are alive now. The donkey has silver bells."

"It can never be spoiled for me again. Whatever the weather, however dark or cold it is, when the rain is thundering on the roof or there is sea-mist everywhere, it makes no difference. It will always be brilliant and burning and alive."

He pressed her hand. "I love you so dearly, Celia. Whatever may happen, never forget that. Nothing can change it. If ever you are troubled, think of this moment. Remember it always. Darling, remember it. Never let it go."

"I will. I will. I will always remember it. I love you, Julius, so deeply that I'm afraid. I think perhaps I haven't the character to love anyone so much. It's as though love of this kind had come to the wrong person. I don't deserve it."

"We none of us deserve it. It's a gift, maybe, more than either of us can carry. We mustn't be cheated by lesser things." He laughed. "I was going to say 'blinded.'"

"Be patient with me, Julius. When we were married six months ago, I thought it was all going to be so easy. I would look after you, and we would love one another, and everything would be lovely. But of course it's not going to be like that. I'll tell you something. When we were driving in the car that first day, just as we were passing this place, I was suddenly terrified. I wanted to get out of the car and run."

"Why?"

"I don't know. I think I saw myself clearly for the first time. I've been so rottenly brought up. Father was always abroad, and Mother never bothered about training me in anything. She only wanted me to be happy so that I wouldn't be a nuisance. I had everything far too early. Boys made love to me before I was fifteen. I was bored with sex before I was eighteen, bored with everything, really. Everyone said that religion was rot, and that all anyone cared for was to have a good time, and that life was a take-in anyway, however good a time one had. Until I fell in love with you, I was a complete waster. And now I'm beginning to see that I've got a job that I'm simply not up to."

"Why?" he said, smiling at her. "Am I so difficult?"

"No. Of course not. You're adorable. But you don't know what someone like me is capable of. I've never been

taught restraint or self-sacrifice. I'm greedy and vain and selfish. I ought never to have married you."

He laughed.

"I'm not much to shout about, either. But the great thing is, we love one another—*really* love one another. I know lots of other people have thought the same, and it hasn't been true. But that's because they haven't been able to stand enough. They've been beaten, halfway through. We won't be, will we?"

"No. Never. Nothing shall beat us."

She stared at the window as though she were committing her oath to the prior, the monk and the donkey.

She laid the palm of her hand against his cheek. "If I loved you less, I wouldn't ever be frightened."

Now they were having tea.

Simon, although he had eaten so much at luncheon, could manage very easily scones with strawberry jam, saffron cake and rock buns so new that they were still warm.

But there was a greater fascination for him than food. He could not take his eyes from Mr. Corwell. That big man and yet not able to see anything! Did he feel like ordinary people? If you touched him was he just the same all over as everybody else?

Unknown almost to himself he crept nearer and nearer. No one noticed him. Everyone was talking, drinking tea, thinking, "This has been a nice day, this has!"

Simon had arrived. He put out his very grubby hand and laid it on Julius' knee.

Julius started. "Hullo, who's that?"

"It's me," Simon said.

Julius' big hand came down on Simon's little one.

"Well—what do *you* want?"

"A piece more of the sugar cake," Simon said in a husky whisper, terrified of his mother who was not far away. Julius' thigh was warm and strong and altogether reassuring. Julius put an arm around him.

"You're Simon?"

"Yes."

"That's right. Enjoyed yourself?"

"Yes. Thank you."

"Will you come and see me in my own home one day?"

"Yes, I will—if Mother lets me."

"Why shouldn't she?"

"She says I'm not to bother."

"Oh, you won't bother. I like little boys. How old are you?"

"Eight and twenty-six days."

"It isn't too late for me to give you a birthday present."

Simon was about to say: "Look what Jim's given me!" But he suddenly remembered. Poor Mr. Corwell couldn't see *anything!* A stray impulse of protectiveness commanded his heart.

So, while he ate his cake, he clutched Julius' hand very hard.

Tea was over. They all prepared to go. Mrs. Ironing, of course, made the only tactless remark of the whole afternoon:

"Oh, Mr. Corwell, I wish you could see! Then you'd know how happy we've all been!"

But Julius was delighted.

Chapter Five

CELIA CORWELL found herself in the little wood to the left of the house and lost in it. Now, at the end of the real summer there was a thick pressure from the trees of leaves about to burgeon into amber, gold, saffron, a glorious transmutation before death. She had noticed it before—that hushed listening pressure of senses before the change—silent, heavy, ominous as with the passing of a human being.

She stood, without moving, the little trees behind her, with the fields that ran down to the hollow, the hill that ran up beyond, moving with rhythm like a sloping green wave of an endless ocean. She saw Jim Burfer with his back to her, bending above a flower-bed that bordered the path in front of the house.

She moved across the lawn toward him and stood again watching the strong sturdy figure working with such easy pleasant naturalness.

"Well, Jim," she said.

He started as though a bird had cried in his ear. The whole world had been so very still. He straightened up and turned to her.

"Planting some chrysanths."

He wiped the back of his hand on his cheek. He was hot and his forehead shone with sweat.

"I might help you if it weren't so hot."

"The last days of summer." He always looked at her with an honest amused frankness. He always seemed to find something funny about her and that she didn't like.

"I hope you find plenty to do," she said.

His shirt was open and the hair on his chest was golden and damp.

"Plenty," he said. "But I like work."

"And do you like being with us?"

JIM grinned. "I always like where I am, for the time being."

"Do you never mean to settle down to anything?"

"No. Why should I? This isn't a world for settling down. The settling-down days are over. There'll be another war soon and then I'll have a real job to do."

"Oh, I hope there won't be another war!"

"Of course there will. It's like turning the soil over before you plant the new seed. My father was a parson, you know, and he used to say: 'Give us peace in our time, O Lord.' But I say: 'Give us war and war—until human beings are made to realize the sort of world there ought to be. Shove it down our throats and then we'll realize!"

"That is very fierce of you. You speak as though you'd had a hard time."

"I haven't. Not at all. I've enjoyed my life. It's been just what I wanted."

She disliked his self-confidence.

"You're lucky. Very few of us can say that."

"That's because most people do what they think they ought to do, not what they want to do."

"If everyone always did just what they wanted, everyone would be miserable. You have to think of others."

"Do you?" he said, looking at her and laughing. "I mean—does everybody? Not as I see it. Everyone's for himself. It's only cowardice makes them think of others."

"What an extraordinary idea! Don't you believe in the goodness of anyone then?"

"Oh, I like people! Everybody, almost. But that doesn't mean that I admire them—any more than I admire myself. Everyone's the same—look after Number One."

She was suddenly angry.

"Well, I don't agree with you. I know lots of unselfish people—my husband, for instance."

"Mr. Corwell? He's different. I think the world of him. There's nothing that I wouldn't do for him. That's how I feel at present, anyway. I may change, of course, and when I do I'll go somewhere else."

He turned his back and went on with his gardening.

She laughed.

"Your manners aren't terribly good, are they?"

She heard him chuckle. . . .

By tea-time she had decided that she would ask Julius to get rid of him. There was something she didn't at all like about him. Besides, he wasn't needed. It came to her that Mrs. Gayner wasn't *really* needed. Julius adored her and was dreadfully under her influence. One day Mrs. Gayner should go—but not yet. She must work slowly and with caution there. It was not in her nature, however, to work slowly about anything. This business of Jim Burfer should be settled at once.

Between six and seven she went into the room that they called the study—a foolish name perhaps, but it was Julius' own room where he had the gramophone, his Braille library and his own writing-table.

When she came in, music was filling the room.

"What's that?" she asked, going over and sitting on the arm of his chair.

"Elgar's Second Symphony. But shut it off; when you're here I like to talk."

She shut it off, went back to him, kissed him and moved away.

"I'm not going to sit with you, because there's something I want to say."

"Can't you say it just as well if we're together?"

"No. Because when you're holding my hand I'm weak. And now I want to be strong."

"Go ahead, then."

"First—I hate Daisy Brenford."

He turned on his side and stared about the room as though he were looking for her.

"How terrible! I don't like her very much myself."

"She hates me too. Mrs. Lamplough told me—"

He interrupted her almost harshly.

"Look here, Celia, you're not to listen to a word that woman says."

"Oh, I know she's a cat—"

"I mean that seriously. We've come to live in a little village and villages are full of gossip. Some people aren't harmed by it, but you're so made that you take everything seriously. You must pay attention to *nothing!*"

"Why, how serious you are!"

"Yes. I get a sort of warning of things sometimes. Perhaps it's being as I am. I hear more than most people. Come here!"

She didn't move.

"Come here! Come here!"

His voice had a crying note in it, of unexpected urgency.

She ran across to him, threw herself on him, kissed his eyes, his cheek, his mouth.

"I tease you. I shouldn't. It's the worst thing I do. But I want you to love me. I want you to! I want you to! I like to hear you cry out like that! I mustn't. I shall tease you once too often!"

After a little while she got up and stood out of his reach. "No. What I said is true. I *can't* fight for myself when I'm touching you. I believe you have twice as much magnetism in your body as people who can see."

"We need some compensation. Come back. Come back. I want you."

"No—"

He stretched out his arms.

"No, Julius. . . . Look here, what do we need to keep Jim Burfer for?"

At that name passion that had filled the room died suddenly from it—just as a drum on an instant ceases to beat. In the new silence their words fell coldly.

"Why—what's the matter with him?"

"I don't like him."

"First Mrs. Brenford, now Jim Burfer."

"Oh, you *are* tiresome! What I mean is that we don't *need* him."

"Don't we?"

"We've got Cotterill and Johnny and Oliphant and Curtis. I know you want this place to look nice, but surely we don't need Jim Burfer as well as all these other men."

HE leaned right over the fat leather arm of the chair, staring just a little to the right of her.

"Now—this interests me. What *have* you got against Jim Burfer?"

"It isn't that I have anything against him. I simply don't see what you want him for."

"I like him."

"Why do you?" she said tempestuously. "There's nothing to like about him. He's a gentleman by birth. What's he doing loafing around—"

"He doesn't loaf."

"No, I must say he doesn't. Anyway he's a waster. In the last two years he's been every sort of thing from a tramp to gentleman's valet. He told me so."

"Oh—so you've been having some talks with him?"

"I asked him a question or two. He has the most *dreadful* reputation, Julius. When he was with the Ironings, no girl in the place was safe from him. He's said to be the father of at least half a dozen children in the village."

"Said to be! Said to be!" Julius retorted. "There you are! Gossip again! I know he's not a saint, but I don't want saints to work for me. They'd make me feel uncomfortable, not being a saint myself."

How maddening and irritating he could be! Yes, and frightening! The change was coming that she knew so well when he passed out of her reach—with his blind eyes he looked into a room where she was not.

"It was silly of me," she said, "to talk about his character. You're quite right. That has nothing to do with it. The point is you don't *need* him."

"That's for me to say."

"No, it isn't altogether. It's to do with me a little, too. You've got all these men about the place *and* Mrs. Gayner. *I'm* not wanted."

She felt a sudden horrid little fear within herself lest he should suddenly say: "No. You're not."

"If it weren't for you," he answered slowly, as though he were counting his words, "we shouldn't be here at all. I wouldn't bother to have a house or servants. I'd have a room at my club and sometimes go to sea."

"And you'd have Oliphant to look after you and be twice as happy as you are now."

He nodded his head. "No. Not *more* happy. A different kind of happiness."

He was gone. He wasn't in the room at all. She was alone. He was always removed from her as soon as he began to see. He was seeing now.

"Then," she cried, "you can have your old ship and your room at the club and Oliphant! If you don't want me you needn't think—"

He was back in the room again.

"Come here. Come here," he said softly. "Don't be angry so often. Like a little child. . . . When I love you so—so very, very much."

She came to him.

EXACTLY as eight-thirty struck from the grandfather's clock halfway up the stairs Violet brought in Mrs. Gayner's supper. Mrs. Gayner liked that her meals should be precisely punctual.

Just before Violet's entry Mrs. Gayner had drawn her curtains. The sky was dark but luminous, promise of the rising moon.

She saw that the ladder was still outside her window. Cotterill had been tending the creeper that covered her side of the house.

She gave the curtains a last loving tug and turned back to the table. There was her favorite supper: cold tongue and cold chicken, a salad, some Stilton, an apple and a jug of beer. Violet stood waiting.

"Will that be everything, Mrs. Gayner?"

"No. As a matter of fact, it will not."

How pretty the girl was! With her dark and rose coloring, her large black eyes with the black eyelashes, her body held erect but lightly. The girl had breeding from somewhere. She had impertinence too. She stood there now, expecting a scolding, angry, her mouth curved with scorn.

("Oh, yes—she thinks I'm an old dumpy woman whom men can't love any longer—so what's the use of me?")

She showed no temper, however, but said quietly:

"Violet, I have a job in this house just as everyone else has. And that job is to see that everything goes along quietly."

"What have I been doing then?"

"You know well enough. You were impertinent to Mr. Curtis this morning when there was no call to be. It wasn't your place to tell him to be quicker about his work."

"Mrs. Corwell wanted the car and sent me to tell him so."

"Did she tell you to be rude to him?"

"He doesn't bother with her. He only thinks of Mr. Corwell."

"That isn't true, but even though it were it's none of it your business."

"It's my business to see that my mistress is properly served."

Mrs. Gayner looked at her. She felt a kindly warmth—Violet was little more than a child, and so very pretty! She sat down to her supper.

"It takes time to know people and this house isn't quite like others, Mr. Corwell being blind."

"I tell you what it is, Mrs. Gayner, there's a lot too much made of Mr. Corwell's blindness. Oh, I know it's an awful thing to be blind. I'm sorry for him all right. But there are plenty of other people blind."

"It isn't only that Mr. Corwell is blind," Mrs. Gayner said quietly. "It is that we have become very attached to him. You will also when you've been here a little."

"Oh, he's all right," the girl said impatiently. "I've nothing against him, but it's my mistress I'm thinking of. You all of you behave as though she were of no account at all."

There was a little pause; then Mrs. Gayner said:

"I didn't ask you to stop, Violet, to discuss our mistress and master. That's not our business. All I want to say is that if you can't behave you'll have to go."

Violet sprang to her feet.

"Oh, will I? And who's to have the saying of that?

Am I at your beck and call, or Mrs. Corwell's? Mrs. Corwell seems well enough satisfied with me and that's good enough for me."

She left the room, banging the door behind.

Well, really! . . . .

Lizzie Gayner ate her supper, but without enjoyment. In all her time with Mr. Corwell such a thing as this had never occurred. There had been troubles, of course, and girls had been impertinent, but unless they apologized they went. There had been little apology here.

And Mrs. Corwell? Would she be behind this impertinence?

She raised her hand to pull the standard lamp nearer to her so that she might see well to read, and fancied that she heard a tap on the window-pane. No, that it couldn't be. Not at this hour of the night. One of the tendrils of the creeper. . . . There was the knock again. Something told her that this was a human being.

She stood up, her hand at her breast. She was frightened. Then she shook her head. No, she was *not* frightened. She was in God's hands. So she went to the window, drew back the curtain and looked out. Because of the light in the room she could see very little, but someone was there, balancing on the top of the ladder. He was peering in with his nose against the pane.

She knew who it was.

"Oh, God! God help me!"

She pulled the window open and drew him in. He jumped onto the floor.

"Gee, Mother," he said, "you do take a time!"

He was a thin man with high shoulders, large bony hands and a face that was ancient and babyish—a timeless face with light watery eyes, faint eyebrows, a large mobile mouth and a small thin nose. He stood there, peering about him as though he had been living in a cellar. He was not a beauty, and he was Lizzie Gayner's only son, Douglas. She had hold of his arm, and the first thing she said was:

"Are the police after you?"

He looked at her with scorn. "No, of course not."

His suit, although too big for him, was not shabby, and he wore in his buttonhole a spray of faded hawthorn.

She held him off, looking at him. Then she kissed him.

"All right, Mother. Don't eat me."

"Where have you been all this while?" she asked sternly.

"What while?"

"It's four months since I heard from you."

"Well, I couldn't. I've been moving about!"

"Moving about!" She spoke scornfully. "I'm sure you have. And now what a nice way to come and see your mother—through the window!"

"Well, how was I to know?" He spoke in a whine and you expected him to put up his arm and shield his face from a blow. Not that Lizzie Gayner had ever struck him. It was his general attitude to life, that he was one of the strikeable.

"You're in a posh position here. You wouldn't want me coming in at the front door, would you?"

NO, she wouldn't. She gave a quick look at the door. No one must, for the moment, know.

She had seated him by the table, herself close to him.

"He hasn't prosecuted you—Mr. Menzies, I mean?"

"He hasn't caught me."

"He easily could. You aren't so difficult to find. They got the cigarette-case back and everything."

"Of course they did—I was a mug."

"Oh, dear, whatever did you do it for? Such a nice place as you had, and Mr. Menzies so good to you."

"That's what I complain of. If he was so good to me why couldn't he be a bit better? He wouldn't let me have the money when I asked him for it—so, I being in the mess I was, I had to take something, didn't I?"

"Do you want something to eat?"

"I had a feed at the pub. I don't mind finishing the beer, though."

He poured it out into her glass and drank greedily.

"How did you know which my room was?"

"I saw you an hour ago looking out of it. I was standing in that there little wood."

"And what do you mean to do now?"

"Stay here for a bit."

"Oh, no! You can't do that!"

"Not in the house, silly. In the village."

In spite of her fears she was pleased. She loved him, and he would be near her.

"You might get me a job. Oh, I don't mean to claim relationship. I don't want you to lose your job."

"I shouldn't. Mr. Corwell would understand. All the same, it's better that way."

She was thinking of Mrs. Corwell. If Mrs. Corwell knew she had for a son a thief who was perhaps at that very moment being sought for by the police, it would be awkward for everybody.

"What do you call yourself?"

"Henry Sharping. That's my stage name."

"Where are you staying?"

"I'm at the Three Crows. Got a bedroom that's cheap as things go. And that reminds me. Got any money?"

"Yes. A little."

She went across to the little bureau, unlocked a drawer, and returned with three pounds. "There!"

He had watched her every movement, his watery eyes as sharp as a pocket-knife.

"Thanks, Mother. And now, so long! I'll be seeing you."

When the window was closed and there was silence in the room she fell on her knees and began to pray.

Chapter Six

DOROTHY BRENFORD had never as yet known a close friend. Because she had never gone to school, and because there had never been, in her lifetime, large families either in or near Garth, she had never exchanged confidences with anyone of her own age. She read books and newspapers, listened to the wireless and went once a year to a dance in Polchester.

She was not a silly girl; she was not more sentimental and romantic than any child of her age who has had no friends outside her own family. She was for one thing extremely busy. When the governess departed, she had to be governess to Simon. All day long there were things to be done for her mother.

She adored her mother. It seemed to her, quite simply, that there could be no one else in the world so beautiful, so wise, so noble. That the ladies of Garth should make her their queen seemed to Dorothy inevitable.

One of the principal characteristics of the Brenford household was that there was never any money. Dorothy took this quite naturally. She had never lived where there was any money. She did not know what it felt like to have any.

But she did know that the house and her clothes were with every swallowing week a little shabbier. Her mother always looked magnificent, but her father was not as he should be, nor was Gilbert, whom she was ever having to patch up.

Gilbert told her everything, and believed absolutely in her judgment. It was this belief in her judgment that sometimes frightened her. It made her so very responsible.

Now, quite suddenly, he had said to her: "Dorothy, Mother doesn't *want* me to have a good time. She'd rather I didn't."

At the moment she made no answer except to say: "Don't be an ass, Gillie." But that night she did not fall asleep at once, but lay listening to the owl hoot and seeing the moonlight shadow with pale austerity the old red carpet. She slept always with her window open and the curtains undrawn. . . . What was the matter with Gillie?

Simon was to give trouble too. On a dim, smoky, purple-shadowed September afternoon, Mrs. Brenford appeared in the schoolroom and said:

"Where's Simon? I've been looking for him everywhere. I want to take him into the village."

There was no Simon; and Dorothy, with a pang of apprehension, knew where he must be. There were times when she was frightened of her mother. She was frightened now.

"Get him for me, Dorothy. I haven't much time."

She said: "He's not in the house."

"Not in the house! What *do* you mean?"

"I know where he is. He's at the Corwells'."

"At the Corwells'! Was he asked, and if so, why wasn't I told?"

"He wasn't asked. He just went. I'm sure that's where he is."

"You're only *sure?* You don't know, then. I thought you were looking after him this afternoon."

"Yes, Mother. But Father wanted me to take a message to Mr. Boss—and while I went, Simon disappeared."

"He may be dead—he may be anything! It's awful, his going to the Corwells' when they don't want him. What were you thinking of, Dorothy? Gillie looks at me as though he hates me; you lose your head; even Simon wants to be with those Corwells all the time!"

Mrs. Brenford turned and left the room.

Dorothy felt an awful desolation. She had betrayed the trust in her. She should have gone at once to the Corwells' and found Simon there. She ought to go now; but she did not, for out of the window she saw Simon, his hand in that of old Wallace the gardener, pointing excitedly to a bonfire beyond the lawn that Wallace was making.

So Simon had not gone to the Corwells' Why had she not tried to find him? Some anger in her mother's face had paralyzed her, made her stupid.

She ran out of the room and found her mother, her hat still on, seated writing a letter. She flung her arms around her and kissed her.

"Mother, it's all right. Simon's out in the garden with Wallace. Shall I call him in?"

But her mother did not respond. Her lovely cheek was cold.

"Never mind, Dorothy. Never mind. But you ought to look after him better than that. Now run away, dear; I'm writing a letter."

Dorothy went out....

A gate from a field opened and shut with a click, and turning, Dorothy saw a man. Was he a man or a boy? A man, wearing a rather shabby mackintosh that reached to his feet. He moved with an odd quick shuffle, and she saw that his face was pale and sharp, with small restless eyes.

All these things she noticed, because at once, without thought or reason, she hated him. So badly did she hate him that she looked and saw that she had yet quite a piece of country road to cover before the outskirts of the village began.

He shuffled along and spoke to her.

"Fine day, miss!"

"Yes," she said, looking straight in front of her.

"I've been for a walk—over the fields and far away!" He half sang the last part of the sentence. He had a husky speaking voice, as though he were always a little breathless. "I say, miss, you might tell me—I haven't been here long. Are you a resident here?"

"Yes, I am."

He dropped his voice confidentially. He was walking quite close to her.

"Why, to tell you the truth, miss, I know who you are. I won't try to deceive you. Why should I? You're the rector's daughter—the Reverend Mr. Brenford. That's right, isn't it?"

"Yes, I am. If you don't mind, I'm in a hurry."

"That's all right, miss, I quite understand. But you might tell me all the same if you know of any job round here."

"No, I don't."

"I'm very adaptable. I am really. I can sing *and* dance; I've been on the Halls. It's truth I'm telling you, and my turn was popular too. But it's wearing work. Always on the move. So I thought I'd settle here for a bit—quiet like."

He was so close to her that she thought for a horrible moment that he would put his hand on her arm.

NOW she was walking so fast that she was almost running, but he kept pace with her very easily, shuffling along, and now and then giving a little skip.

"I could be a servant to a gentleman. Perhaps your reverend father could do with some assistance. Or I could write his letters for him. I'm handy at letters." He drew in his breath with a little whistling sound.

How she hated him! He was to her like something out of a dream. In another moment he would touch her. He must not, he must not!

Someone passed them slowly on a bicycle. It was Jim Burfer. She cried out: "Jim! Jim!" He looked back, he got off his bicycle and came toward her, grinning. The strange man touched his hat, muttered something and shuffled off to the other side of the road.

Jim reached her side. "Hullo! What are *you* doing?"

She was breathless. She caught his arm, pressed it as though to thank him, then dropped it again.

"Oh, Jim, I'm so glad! . . . No, it's nothing. But that strange man spoke to me, and I didn't like him!"

"Did he, by blazes!"

Jim Burfer looked after him.

"No. He didn't do any harm. He only asked me if I knew of any job anywhere. He says he's staying in the village."

"He won't be here long if he makes trouble. I'll see to that!"

She was happy again, walking along beside him.

"How are you, Jim? Do you like it at the Corwells'?"

"Certainly I do. He's a grand man; he is truly."

"And what's she like?"

"Oh, she's funny. A bit wild, I fancy. But I like her, all right."

"I'm very glad. That means you'll be staying here."

"I'll be staying if *you* want me to!"

Dorothy laughed. "Of course I do. We all want you to. We missed you like anything when you were away."

"Did *you* miss me?"

"Of course I did."

They had reached the first houses. He got onto his bicycle, waved his hand and rode ahead.

Chapter Seven

(FROM JULIUS CORWELL'S JOURNAL)

SEPTEMBER 5.

I began a journal once, I remember, in hospital when I was well enough to amuse myself. I had just learned that I would be blind as long as I lived. I wasn't unhappy. It seemed an exciting new experience, and everybody was so kind to me. I was reveling in a new sense of touch. There was a nurse whose hands were miraculous.

I was very young. I was young enough to have said to Alfredson: "I'm beginning to believe Beethoven has been overpraised," just before I took that moment's look over the top and got the bullet that blinded me. I was awfully well that day. Light in the eyes, the mouth, the heart. Light! My God, light! For the very last time. Had I only known, I would have taken in every last detail of that hateful desert, the blue sky and the filthy soil. Every last grain of dust I would have taken in.

Now I'm writing melodrama. "Take it quietly, my son," is what the doctor said before he operated. I did, and I will.

I have always wanted to write. I've read almost nothing in the last twenty years. I hate being read to. Reading Braille is somehow for me not amusing.

I kept up the other journal for a long time. I was twenty years younger then. I stopped when I married. I used to tell Elinor everything, so why write? After her death I began again, and went on until I met Celia. Then I stopped. I was too happy to go on. Now I've begun again. Does that mean, then, that I'm unhappy? No. That something's wrong? Not quite. But nearly. It isn't working out as I expected. This house isn't. Celia isn't. I'm not.

What is happening?

Well, then, to begin with, I am in a way obsessed by my blindness. After twenty years I perhaps oughtn't to be. But in a way, I am obsessed more than I was twenty years ago, and I believe that that is true of everyone who is blind, whether they will admit it or no.

I have repeated *in a way,* because *that* is the point.

What kind of man was I before the War? Not a man, but a boy. Physically very strong, and loving to excel at games, keeping myself fit for them, never having a woman, drinking very little, that ascetic-corporal life whose origins are Greek, whose business development is British.

Queerly enough, I never cared very much about reading. And then I had all my games—squash, tennis, rugger—good fun while it lasted.

I didn't mind the War, did I? Honestly, I liked the reality of it—the reality of friendship, comradeship, fear, boredom. I was planning what I would do after it. I knew that I would have plenty of money through my fa-

ther's steel. Money made out of war. I planned to create a kind of perfect workman's Paradise. To give myself heart and soul to that. And I would marry a woman who cared also for those things.

September 8.

The greatest division between men is, I think, whether they are conscious of their individuality or no.

If I were not blind, I should scarcely have time to stop and think, and so it is I suspect with millions of people everywhere; but *being* blind, there's almost nothing that I like so much. For blindness has placed me for twenty years altogether apart from other men. Only Elinor and Lizzie Gayner in my whole world have understood that they must come to me. I cannot go to them. This is not egotism or conceit. It is a law. It is as though I were in a cage. This Celia cannot understand.

But it is a cage that, for myself (and only myself) opens into a new world of light and infinity. I have for twenty years now been constantly tempted to explore this new mysterious world that my blindness has opened for me. I go a little way and then retrace my steps, *because the further I go, the more deeply removed I am from those I love.* I have underlined this (a little crookedly I expect) because this is the cause of the trouble between Celia and me. We love one another, but she wants to possess me totally. My blindness eludes her. Both her heart and her pride are frightened.

September 11.

There has been a stupid little scene. I suppose Celia and I are in the wrong. For some weeks now little Simon Brenford, aged eight, has taken it into his head to come over here. The fact is that ever since a day when I gave a picnic by Sizyn Church, I have fascinated him.

Simon has been like a kitten or a puppy tumbling over me. He turns up quite suddenly. Yesterday afternoon about three he arrived, kissed me and went off with Jim Burfer into the garden. Half an hour later Celia had given me a hug, preparatory to going off to tea with the Ironings, was making sure that I was all right, when—Mrs. Brenford is announced.

"Where's Simon?" she said at once, as though we had kidnaped him. I did the wrong thing. I laughed.

She turned on me. "It's all very well for you to laugh, Mr. Corwell, but it is really past a joke. The child is always disappearing without a word to any of us, and it's here that he comes."

I was at once apologetic and conciliatory. I said that we had done very ill, but that in fact we thought that he came here with his parents' knowledge. He liked the house and the garden.

"Not at all," she broke in. "It's you that he likes, Mr. Corwell. He's mad about you." Everything might then have been well. She approves of me, for some reason or another. But Celia burst in with something about our naturally supposing that Mrs. Brenford knew where he was. We should never imagine that so young a child would be allowed to wander off just as he pleased.

And that set Mrs. Brenford off. Mrs. Corwell hadn't any children, and therefore would naturally not understand the modern child. Then the two ladies were at it, icily polite, their voices packed with dynamite.

The real pity is that we sha'n't have Simon any more. If he does arrive, he must be sent at once home again.

September 14.

Were Celia dead and I a great man writing my autobiography, it would be filled with her. What achievement, or discovery, what acquaintance with great men can compare for a single instant with a great love? Now, about Elinor there would be in my autobiography very little. Yet how good she was, how happy we were, how she guarded and protected me, how grateful I was and am!

I have perhaps done Celia the greatest injustice by marrying her. I am forever haunted by this. Too young she was, to realize what marriage to a blind man must mean.

September 18.

A morning of the most desperate depression yesterday. I was removed, far removed, from all human beings. I wanted none of them.

Celia as yet cannot leave me alone. If I am lost and bewildered and away from everyone, she thinks that it is with her that I am hurt. It must be with *her* that I am hurt!

And so last night I told her, having her in my arms, that she must realize, once and for all, that I am *maimed* for life, that when that bullet hit me, it not only killed my sight but also did me some general damage—my soul, my mind, my body. Upon that she protested that it was not so, that it was exactly that morbid idea of myself that I must conquer. That I brooded and was too much alone, thinking about myself.

Very quietly, and I hope lovingly, I tried to show her that it was not brooding nor melancholy, but only love of following my own thoughts. That I had been blind for twenty years now, and that naturally I lived often inside my own mind, but that my doing so did not mean that I loved her less, or was angry or unhappy. . . . My depression yesterday morning was a return of the mood that I got sometimes in the trenches.

Jim Burfer reads for an hour every morning bits out of the papers for me. He does it very well, with sense and humor. I can see very clearly that another world war is inevitable, and that it will be more devastating than the last simply because, for all of us, our resources will be fewer. After a year or two our civilization really will be smashed. And then what? A blind man sitting in his chair as chaos creeps like a fog across the garden toward him. I thought of Celia, so lovely, so young—and perhaps our son.

I was in despair all morning. I sat there with my hands folded, waiting for some kind of sound announcing destruction. And then Celia rushed in and thrust a chrysanthemum under my nose. I catch her hands: I feel her standing, her heart thumping. I know her eyes are on my face, serious, inquiring like a child's. I hold her close to me, her head against my beating heart.

September 22.

Sometimes Celia and I are both together and at the same time completely childish. This is an extraordinary lightness that comes from light or good digestion, or a fine sleep. I don't know.

Celia has the gift especially. Even though she had been having a row with someone half an hour before, she will quite suddenly throw it off completely. I never knew anyone who begs pardon and says she is sorry so easily—a thing I find it dreadfully hard to do. She has one of the finest gifts the gods can give us—the ability to see the other person's point of view.

Lizzie Gayner came in about the housekeeping accounts, and I realized that something was wrong—*has* been wrong, in fact, for a fortnight or more. How do I realize this? For she has said nothing. In voice or movement, but especially in something that is *scent* more than voice or movement, Lizzie has for many years represented to me a kind of dried, aging, immensely clean, good health. But for a fortnight now Lizzie has not smiled. Now and then there is a tremble in her voice. Her hand is hot and the pulse beats in it. Something is greatly distressing her. I felt it especially this morning.

After she was gone, Jim Burfer came in and said quite abruptly: "I expect I'll be off on my travels again very shortly, sir."

It was a great shock to me. I thought he was very happy and contented with us. I asked him why.

"Just restless again."

"Perhaps you'd better go," I said. "You're beginning to be useful to me. I don't want to be dependent on anyone."

"Do you mean that, sir?" he asked with a quick catch of the voice.

"Yes, I mean it."

Chapter Eight

CELIA was kindly by an instinct as natural as breathing. Just as when she was in a temper she wished to hurt her adversary by any means, however illegal, in her power, so when she felt kindly, she would go to any distance, take any trouble, or give anything away.

So when she heard that poor Mrs. Lamplough had missed pneumonia by a breath, and was weak and devastated after a sort of bronchial influenza, she hurried off to the Lamplough mansion, bearing two bottles of wine,

a bag of tangerines and a bottle of brandy-balls, the last a cure, to her mind, of every conceivable ill.

Mrs. Lamplough was delighted to see Celia; she was still in bed. Celia stood in the doorway bearing her gifts and sniffing. The room had that scent of camphor, oil, scent and flannel that belongs to a lady's sick-chamber when she isn't very ill. The room was pretty but oppressively hot.

Celia, who loved to give people things, even when they hadn't the least desire for them, explained her presents.

"I would have come before, but oddly enough, I knew nothing about it. You've been in bed a week, haven't you? What a shame!"

Mrs. Lamplough caught Celia's hand in hers.

"That's sweet of you," she whispered. "You oughtn't to have bothered."

"Does it hurt you to talk?"

"Not a bit! It does me good. I like to hear all the news, you know, although I don't believe in gossip, not malicious gossip."

"No. Nor do I," Celia said. "At least, it's very difficult to tell where it *begins* to be malicious, don't you think?"

"Oh, I think one can *always* tell," whispered Mrs. Lamplough. "Never say anything you wouldn't like the other person to hear."

Mrs. Lamplough settled herself in against her pillows. She had the face of an old baby who was waiting to be mischievous. Nevertheless her eyes were grave, and she never let herself go in merriment.

"And how are you liking it, my dear? Are you really *settled in?*"

"Yes. Thank you. It's all very nice."

"And your husband?"

"Oh, Julius is very happy. Although he can't *see* the places, having been here as a child makes it all so real to him."

"I suppose it does. We're all *so* excited about your being here, you know!"

"Oh, are you? I can't see anything very exciting about *us*—especially about *me!*"

Mrs. Lamplough's eyes sparkled.

"Your being *rich* is one thing. We haven't had anyone here with a penny, in anyone's memory."

Celia smiled.

"Even Mr. Brenford is waking up a little. I'm sure he's been asking your husband for all sorts of things."

"No. I don't think he has. We're not, I'm afraid, very religious. That is, we don't go to church. And Mrs. Brenford doesn't like *me* very much."

WHEN Celia made this last remark, it was exactly as though she had plopped a ripe sweet plum, straight into Mrs. Lamplough's mouth.

"Oh, really! What makes you think that?"

"Everyone knows she doesn't."

"That's because she's jealous." Mrs. Lamplough nodded with infinite pleasure. "One thing," she continued eagerly, "I rather wonder at your husband's doing, was to engage that wastrel Jim Burfer."

"Oh," Celia said, staring at her, "he seems all right. Julius likes him."

"All right! When he was with the Ironings what he didn't do! However, it's really no business of mine."

"What sort of things?"

"Well—no woman was safe from him, for one thing."

Celia laughed. "That was the fault of the women, I should think. Women can be safe if they want to be."

Mrs. Lamplough delightedly pursed her lips.

Celia laughed again. "Anyway, he's not dangerous in *our* house. Old Mrs. Gayner looks after the maids like a demon."

"Does she? Does she?" Mrs. Lamplough drew in her breath. "That's good, because your husband can't see what's going on, and you're very young—much younger than he is. And he's so fascinating. That silly Phyllis Larch is madly in love with him. . . . Not that that matters—"

Celia said: "I don't feel that he's so much older. I love him so terribly."

"Do you? Do you, my dear?"

Her hand now was clasped tightly.

"Yes. Of course I do. I'd been brought up to think that no one was any good, that fine character was a thing to laugh at. He's too fine for me—that's the trouble."

Celia had forgotten Mrs. Lamplough. She had been thinking of Julius, of their life together, of her own fears. She came back to another realization with a start—a realization that was visual rather than anything else: a picture of Julius and herself sitting in the lamplight close together, the dark walls safely about them, and Mrs. Lamplough was at the window, peering in, eagerly peering in! They were threatened; they were watched; they were overheard. Something evil was trying to get into the house.

She released her hand. "I must be off."

AND Celia climbed into her Austin and drove straight out to the moor, which was not what she had intended to do. That old woman had disturbed her, frightened her. How? Why? What was coming? What was the matter with her nerves?

One thing the matter with them was that she had not enough to do. Somehow Mrs. Lamplough had shown her that. Her picture of her life with Julius in the depths of the country had been a loving alliance, Julius depending on her, everyone depending on her, voices whispering: "She's marvelous. All that she manages to do—and little more than a child."

But there was nothing to do. Mrs. Gayner did the housekeeping, Curtis the car, Oliphant the valeting, Jim Burfer the newspaper-reading. She did the loving, the sentiment, the emotion. . . . Oh, yes, and they talked; but she fancied that although Julius did not think himself very clever, he thought that she was less so.

She drove the car forward furiously. He was right. She had had no education. She had been taught to dress, to drink, to prevent young men from reaching their ultimate but very temporary desire. That was all.

She had hoped that by now there would be promise of a child. There was none.

She knew, quite suddenly, what it was that she wanted. She wanted someone of her own age, her own kind, as bad and selfish and uneducated and stupid as herself, to whom she could pour out her heart. There was no one.

Why had that old woman with the pink bows in bed the power to hurt her? What if Mrs. Brenford *did* dislike her? She knew, though, that that did hurt her. She liked to be liked.

Then Phyllis Larch! Mrs. Lamplough had said that she was in love with Julius. Well, the girl was a fool, and everyone knew it; but—a blind man was so defenceless. Julius was so kind, so good to everyone. The Larch girl might misunderstand.

Oh, stupid, stupid! What did it matter if they all discussed, watched, waited?

But she herself was also watching and waiting. That was where the wrong was. She herself was not at ease. Julius had recognized it, for only two days ago he had suggested that she should pay London a visit, see her parents, have a good time. Why had he suggested it? Was he already tired of her? Why was it that she could never tell exactly what was in his mind?

She pulled the car up. She was at the Crossroads. She got out of the car and stood on the road, feeling the grit beneath her shoe, then moved up onto the moor and seemed in that mist, with that yielding life-giving surface beneath her, herself to be floating.

There was no sound in the mist and there was every sound. Then, most unexpectedly, there was a voice:

"Mrs. Corwell."

It was Jim Burfer with his bicycle.

"Why—what are you doing here?"

She was angry, as though he had been spying upon her. Then, she knew not why, she was pleased.

"My father, when he rang the bell for early service, used to say: 'You never know your luck!' "

She felt that she must explain something—but what?

"I drove up to get a breath of air. . . . Mrs. Lamplough's in bed, ill."

They were moving together, he pushing his bicycle over the springing rejoicing turf.

She looked at him. He was as strong and hearty a young man as she had ever seen. He must be about her own age.

"How old are you, Jim?"

"Twenty-six."

They were approaching the church, which seemed to float forward to meet them.

He said, grinning: "You don't like me much, do you, Mrs. Corwell?"

"Oh, I don't know! I didn't at first. You've got a very bad reputation, you know."

"Only because I'm natural." They were standing looking at the church. "I wouldn't like to hurt anybody, though. Only I don't believe in anything."

"No?"

"What is there to believe in any more? Love of your country is vulgar, belief in God stupid, belief in man sentimental. There'll be another war shortly. We'll all be blown to bits."

"And so?"

"Take what you can, while you can."

She felt happy in his company. She was talking at last simply, without affectation, to someone of her own queer lost generation.

He put out his hand and touched her arm.

"I'm awfully glad you don't dislike me, Mrs. Corwell."

She didn't move away.

"No. I don't. But I think it's a pity, with your birth and education, you've turned into a sort of loafer."

"Now, that's a snobbish kind of thing to say. Birth and education! You should know better than to use those words. Birth and education! As though birth means anything any more—and I'm educating myself all the time."

"I used to think birth doesn't mean anything any more. But now I'm not so sure. It means something if it means good manners. We, all of us, have been so rude and unkind for so long. We thought we were honest, courageous, said what we meant. Now that rudeness is getting as old-fashioned as courtesy seemed to us."

"I don't think I'm rude," he said gently. "I don't want to hurt a soul, and if a lie makes them happy, why not? But I don't want to waste my time, because time's so short and there's nothing to come after."

He took her hand and kissed it, and was gone with his bicycle. She heard him whistling in the mist. His lips had been warm and strong on her hand. She went slowly back to the car and stood listening for a moment before she got into it.

SHE stood in the hall of the house looking up the stairs. Then she heard the music from the gramophone in the study and went in softly, stood inside the door, swinging her hat in her hand.

The music stopped. Then as it began again, she went forward and ended it altogether.

"I want to talk," she said. "Tea will be here in a minute."

Julius smiled and held out his hand. She put her arms around his neck, rubbed his cheek with hers.

"I went to Mrs. Lamplough's."

"Was it nice?"

"Nice! No. She frightened me."

"How could she?"

"I don't know. She did. She said Phyllis Larch was in love with you."

He laughed, kissing her eyes.

"She said I was too young for you."

"She did?"

"No. She didn't *say* it. That was what she meant."

"And then?"

"And then I went away."

She knelt down, her head on his thigh.

"I love you so much—so very, very much. . . . And then I went onto the moor."

"Was it beautiful?"

"It was beautiful beyond anything—a gold trembling mist. Jim Burfer appeared on his bicycle."

"You like him better now, don't you?"

"A little. After a minute or two he went away."

She broke out, clutching his hand in both of hers:

"Julius—isn't it awful?—I don't want ever to leave you. I mean not for an hour or two in the afternoon. That's the kind of wife I said I'd never be, clutching, possessive. It's just the kind of wife I am. I want *all* of you, *all* of you."

"You have all of me."

"No, I haven't."

"What *I* haven't got," he spoke slowly, "is your youth. I'm so old. I sit here and think how much older I am."

She caught his head and his thick strong neck in her arms. She kissed him again and again, laughing.

"If you'd been younger, I never would have fallen in love with you. I hate young men—stupid, conceited, ignorant. Aren't they? You know they are."

"Yes," he said. "But when *you're* feeling young yourself, don't you want them like that? Stupid and arrogant—your own mind."

"If you could *see* how I love you," she said.

Chapter Nine

UPON the fourth of October, Mrs. Brenford received notice that one-third of Gilbert's school was ill with chickenpox. The school would be temporarily closed. This news was received at breakfast-time. Daisy Brenford said: "*Now* what are we going to do?" Mr. Brenford, whose breakfast was always a joy to him, took the last sausage and the last piece of toast, winked at Simon, who had observed this, and said:

"Do about what?"

"Do you realize that this means that Gilbert will be at home without a break until nearly the end of January?"

"Well, dear, why not?"

"Why not? Why not? But what's he going to do with himself all that time? Who's going to teach him anything?"

"Teach him?" Mark Brenford looked across to his wife, with his profile neatly turned. "Let him learn from nature for a while. It won't do him any harm."

"Mark—please! . . . Be serious for once. Do you know Gilbert's age? Nearly fifteen. He's getting very difficult indeed. Last holidays, he was rude and surly. He'll probably spend his time with the Corwells like Simon. A holiday of more than two months will be simply fatal for him. Who's to look after him? I certainly cannot."

Daisy Brenford looked across the table, as she had often done before, wondering what next she should say or do. Everyone beyond the Vicarage thought her lovely, intelligent, charming, homage-worthy. Why, then, were her husband and children so unperceptive? Dorothy, at least, was not. She had heard the news with rapture.

"Oh, Mother, how lovely! He can learn with me. We can read the same books, and Mrs. Mark has promised to teach me some French."

When Gilbert arrived, Dorothy took the greatest care not to be demonstrative. On every occasion when he returned from school, she had a secret fear that he would believe in her a little less. She saw with delight that he needed her more than ever before. He was nervous about his mother. He looked at her shyly. On the morning after his arrival, he spoke to Dorothy about it.

"I was rotten to Mother last holidays."

"You were angry. You thought she'd been unfair to you."

"No. It was more that I thought she didn't care."

"Of course she cares, Gillie. She cares most awfully about all of us."

"I'm awfully glad."

His face was eager, his slim body strong and taut.

"Dorothy, look here! I'm going to be home a long time now, and what I want is for Jim Burfer to teach me how to carve. Do you think he will?"

"Of course he will."

That afternoon, a very fine one, Gilbert went off for a walk to think things out for himself.

He made for the Well, the thick wood below the moor, where the primroses always came first. At the entrance to the wood, by the side of the road, he saw a motorcar. Nobody was in it.

He entered the wood by a little path that he knew well, and traced his way, treading over the dead leaves and stopping sometimes to wonder at the silence. He cut himself a stick, and as he walked, peeled it with his pocket-knife.

He pushed some branches aside and came out onto the clearing and looked at the waterfall. Mr. Corwell was standing there, leaning against a tree. He was quite motionless and staring into the sky, his head cocked as though he were listening. His body seemed to Gilbert very big and strong. His hands were still; his face was still; his blue open eyes stared upward.

At first Gilbert thought that he would go away, but Mr. Corwell had at once heard him, although Gilbert had

made very little sound. His body was suddenly alive. He smiled.

"Hullo!" he said.

"Hullo!" Gilbert replied.

"That's a boy," Mr. Corwell said.

"Yes," Gilbert answered, moving forward. "I'm Gilbert Brenford."

"I thought you were away at school."

"I ought to be, but we've had chickenpox, and I've come home."

Mr. Corwell, who was wearing a large rough dark blue overcoat, said: "Come over to me; then we can talk better."

Gilbert, rather frightened although he didn't know why, went over to him. Mr. Corwell leaned comfortably back against the tree again.

"When you're blind," he said, "you can hear leaves dropping. That's what I was listening to."

"Can you really?"

Mr. Corwell put his hand on Gilbert's shoulder.

"Are you alone?"

"Yes sir."

"Not even a dog?"

"No."

"Just going for a walk by yourself?"

"Well, you see, where the waterfall is, I've always thought the best place of the lot round here, and I was awfully disappointed at the school shutting, and I'd only just got home, so I thought I'd come here."

"You think this the best place of the lot, do you?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, for sound and smell, I should say it is. . . . I must be getting back. Give me your arm."

Gilbert proudly did so.

"You can just see me to the car. Would you like a drive?"

"No, thanks," Gilbert said. "I'm walking."

"Of course you are," Mr. Corwell said gravely. "I forgot."

Gilbert led him to the car with the very greatest care, but had a curious impression that Mr. Corwell was leading *him*.

"You know, your brother Simon is a great friend of ours."

"Yes. He's always talking about you."

"Is he? That's very flattering."

"You don't know Dorothy much, though, do you?"

"No, I don't."

"She's the best of the lot. She couldn't be better."

"You must bring her to tea one day."

"Oh, may I? I want to see your house most awfully."

"Yes, we'll settle a day."

The car was there, and Curtis now sitting in it.

Mr. Corwell gripped Gilbert's shoulder a moment and climbed into the car.

GILBERT'S adventures for that afternoon were not, however, yet ended. Walking back to the village, he considered Mr. Corwell from every possible point of view. He liked him very much, but unlike Simon, felt that he was strange.

Thus thinking, Gilbert, looking ahead, saw three dogs and a very strange little man in a shabby ulster walking with an odd skipping walk beside them. The dogs all trotted at his heels, keeping close to him. They were most certainly not beauties—in fact, mongrels. The odd little man saw Gilbert coming and stopped.

"Good afternoon, sir," he said.

"Good afternoon," Gilbert answered politely.

The dogs also stopped.

Gilbert did not care for the looks of the little man.

"Are those your dogs?" Gilbert asked.

"They are and they aren't, as you might say. The fox terrier was given me. The black dog called Horace came limping up to me, and I don't *where* he's come from. The sort of half-poodle hasn't a home either."

"I've always wanted to have a dog," said Gilbert, sighing.

"Have you, now? Well, you can have any one of these you like to pick."

"Oh, no! Mother and Father would never allow me to keep one."

"You never know till you try."

The fox terrier, as though he were aware that there was a possibility of something exciting, began to pretend that he had a game with a flying leaf. He barked shrilly, ran a little away and looked up at Gilbert.

They all walked on to the beginning of the village.

"What's his name?" asked Gilbert.

"I called him Benson. . . . Say, I know who you are," he said. "You're the Rector's son."

"Yes, I am," said Gilbert.

"I was talking to your sister one day."

"Oh, yes?"

"Look here," the man said, "I'll tell you what I'll do: I want Benson to have a good home. You take him and try him—see what your mother says. He's a clean little dog."

Gilbert knew that he was lost, and Benson knew that he knew.

"All right. I will."

It seemed that it was not his own voice that had spoken these daring words.

The little man was grinning.

"So long. See you later."

It was as though the little man had known him all his life.

Gilbert moved toward the Rectory.

"Go on," said the man to Benson. "There's your master now."

Benson did not hesitate. He followed Gilbert, keeping close to him and wagging his tail.

They arrived at the house; Gilbert opened the door, walked into the hall. Mrs. Brenford was standing there.

"Hullo, darling, have you—"

Then she stopped. She saw Benson. She could not help but do so, for he was smelling at her calves.

Gilbert began at once:

"I hope you won't mind, Mother, but I met a man, and he said I could have this dog. We've never had a dog, have we, Mother, and this one is house-trained and everything, and anyway, he could sleep in the tool-shed. I expect he's awfully good with mice."

This last he added on the toe of the dramatic moment, because he knew that his mother hated mice.

She looked at her son and loved him. But she would not surrender too quickly.

"A dog? My dear Gillie!"

"I know, Mother, but—"

"And *what* a dog!"

Gilbert, amazed that his request had not been at once rejected, began at once to hope.

"You see, Mother, he can be most awfully useful. I don't know how we've got on without a dog so long."

"That's quite enough, Gillie. I don't know *what* your father would say—"

"Oh, Father always does what *you* want, Mother."

Gilbert, shy of demonstration, nevertheless went to her and kissed her.

"Mother, thank you most awfully."

Transformed with happiness, he rushed up the stairs, Benson barking, rushing after him. At the top of the stairs was his father.

"Good heavens, what's this?"

"It's Benson, Father!"

"Oh, I see."

And Gilbert rushed on. He must tell Dorothy.

Chapter Ten

JULIUS CORWELL'S JOURNAL

OCTOBER 23:

I have had a strange return of what I must call, I suppose, for want of a better word, my day-nightmares.

During the last fortnight the world around me is going all wrong. How great a relief it is to me to write those words down! For weeks I have been hesitating to say them to myself. What is the matter with everybody—with Celia, with Mrs. Gayner, with Burfer, even with Oliphant and Curtis?

Well, with Celia at least I know what it is—she is beginning to hate my blindness. She is beginning to find my blindness her enemy, because it won't surrender to her. The more she loves me and wants me, the more she hates my blindness, and resents it, and is angry with it. It is upsetting everybody.

October 25.

Celia and I quarreled this afternoon in good dead earnest. I behaved badly. I behaved badly because I am a perfectly ordinary man. The quarrel arose, of course, out of nothing. The whole business of successful lovers is to keep in step. A little in front, a little behind, just that much out of step, and almost at once you begin to lose yourselves in terrifying darkness.

This is serious, monstrous, ridiculous, absurd. After the quarrel we dined, saying polite nothings. Then we sat in the study and I turned on the Sibelius Fifth—which was stupid, I suppose, because one of the things we are quarreling about is music, oddly enough. When it was over I began, "Celia, darling—" and at once she went out.

Later, I went up to bed, and knew that she was there before me. When I lay down in my bed, I stretched out my hand to take hers. As soon as I touched her arm, she withdrew it. Then she said in the voice of the ice-maiden:

"Please—don't touch me. I don't want to be touched. If you touch me, I'll have my bed somewhere else."

This morning I caught her as she was going out, led her into the study, shut the door behind us, put my arms round her and kissed her.

"Forgive me. Forgive me. I've been stupid, blundering. I'll be better. I'll be wiser."

But she wouldn't surrender. Her lips were warm but dead. She said, quietly, as though she were repeating a lesson, "There's nothing to forgive. It's just stupid," and went out.

Now another mystery. Before I went up to dress for dinner, Mrs. Gayner came in. She wanted to know about some sheets and blankets she was ordering from Harrods. I said:

"You must speak to Mrs. Corwell, Lizzie. I want her to be consulted about all those things."

I put my hand on her arm. It was trembling.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"The matter, sir?"

"Yes, Lizzie. You're in trouble. You've been so for weeks. What's your trouble?"

She withdrew from my touch.

"I think, sir," she said, "I'll have to leave."

"What's the trouble? Is it my wife? Are you getting on badly?"

"Oh, no sir. That's all right. She'd understand me in time."

I knew, suddenly, that she was very unhappy—not only unhappy, but frightened.

"If it's not that, what is it?"

"I'm afraid I can't tell you, sir."

"Can't tell me? But you've always told me everything."

I took her hand then and held it, for so I must do if I'm to *see* my friend. I told her that I was myself in some trouble, that things weren't easy, that I needed her as I had never needed her before.

Her hand was warm and trembling in mine. She said at last:

"Very well, sir. I can't leave you if you need me."

I tried once more: "But *what* is it, Lizzie? Is someone pestering you—are you ill?"

She said then: "Mrs. Corwell has discovered that the two silver cigarette-boxes in the drawing-room are missing."

I laughed at that. "She doesn't accuse *you* of taking them?"

"No sir. I must say, she trusts me."

"Well then, where's your trouble?"

"It isn't pleasant, sir, when things are missing."

"Of course not. But if there's a thief, we'll soon find him."

"Yes sir."

I let her go. She was changed. She was a thousand miles away from me. Damn these women! I shall move into a monastery.

November 20.

This ridiculous business has reached a new stage. About a week ago Celia and I were reconciled, after an interval of more than a fortnight. After that, she was stiff and schoolgirlish during the day. She is in a nervous, exaggerated state. I sometimes hope that it may mean that she is going to have a child.

This morning she was in the room. Jim Burfer came in. I fancied that they stood looking at one another. And why should they not? The last man alive I would b jealous of is Burfer. He is devoted to me. Devoted? A exaggerated word. He likes me. I trust him.

Chapter Eleven

SIMON BRENFORD discovered suddenly tha life was of an absorbing and dramatic inter est. Not that life had, during the whole c his eight years, shown the slightest sign c dullness. He had not, since he first drev breath, known a single moment's dreariness He had always planned his life on his ow lines, and anyone who does that knows that he must out wardly acquiesce in the foolish desires of other peopl With all this, he was not a horrid little boy. He was save by the possession of a warm heart. He had developed no a very clever technique about visiting the Corwells. H knew that his mother greatly disliked his going there. H knew, too, his mother's habits exactly.

On a certain afternoon in November, when the dusk wa beginning to sweep through the valley in a violet-gra haze, Simon was in the Garth garden. A bonfire of dea leaves was burning and crackling at the end of the lawn Simon was hiding in the little wood, for he thought tha Jim Burfer was coming. He would spring out on him an surprise him.

Celia was coming in from her afternoon walk. Sh stopped at the end of the lawn to watch the little gold an sullen red tongues of flames as they sprang from the bon fire and mocked the sky. She thought that she woul walk to the house through the little wood. She was ver unhappy.

Jim Burfer, pushing dead leaves into the bonfire, sa her cross the lawn and followed her.

The afternoon was not cold. So, at least, Mrs. Gayne thought, slipping out of the house, keeping close to th hedge as she hurried along the road.

There is, some thirty yards before you reach the Thre Crows, a narrow path that leads off from the main roa between fields. Mrs. Gayner found her son waiting fo her. She kissed him as she had kissed him when he wa a little boy.

"Why didn't you come last week? I haven't seen yo for a fortnight, except once passing you in the road."

"I couldn't get away, Mother."

"Get away from what? You aren't doing any wor that I know of."

"I've sold a dog and some other things."

"Yes." Mrs. Gayner moved away from him a littl "I know what you've been selling: Those cigarette-boxes.

"Look here, Mother, I told you I hadn't taken then didn't I?"

"What do you lie to me for? I *know* you're a thie God help me. And everything else that is bad."

He suddenly slipped his hand into hers. She could nc help but hold it and press it. It was so thin and so sligh

"Look here, Mother, have you brought me the dough?

"I've brought you enough to get to London with. I'v written the address of the place you're to stay at ther To that address I'm sending you your ticket to Jamaic and a few pounds more. I've written to your cousin i Kingston, and he'll give you something to do."

There was a silence. The little man shuffled about o the dry leaves. At last he said:

"Gee, Mother, I don't understand you. I'm the onl son you've got, and I've come to live near you, and her you are pushing me thousands of miles away just a though you hated the sight of me."

"It isn't you I hate, Douglas," she answered passionate ly. "It's your character. And why you've got that cha acter I can't tell. . . . Are you going to London tomo row? Answer me that."

"I don't know."

"You can't do anything by staying here. You kno you can't, Douglas. I can't go on keeping you. I haven got the money."

"I'm going to stay," he answered. "I like it here. can't leave my dogs, anyway. Besides—there's a girl.

"A girl?" She caught her breath. "Oh, no!"

"You needn't worry, Mother. She's the parson's daugh ter."

"Miss Brenford? Why, she's a child!"

"She's lovely," he said. "I'd do anything for her. I like to see her walking out. She's so serious, and she's kind. She's like a spring flower."

"Don't you frighten her or speak to her or anything!" Mrs. Gayner said fiercely. "If you do, I'll tell Mr. Corwell and have you sent away."

Something touched him—the distress in his mother's face, perhaps. He kissed her.

"Don't you worry. I'll think about going to London. It's dark, almost. You'd best be getting home."

CELIA stood for a moment watching the bonfire. She recalled no time in all her life when she had been as miserable as she was now. She was furious with Julius, and loved him more than ever before. She loved him, but he had eluded her. He was separated from her by all these people who surrounded him—by Oliphant, by Curtis, by Mrs. Gayner.

She was lonely with a new loneliness. She had not a friend in this horrible place. She hated Garth; she hated Glebeshire. And they hated *her*.

She entered the wood. How dark the leaves, how white the bark in the thickening dusk! The leaves were ferocious. And behind a tree Simon was waiting to leap out. But he would not until Jim Burfer was also there.

She heard the steps crunching the crisp fallen leaves and turned. "Jim— Hullo!" She was pleased. He had become in these last weeks her friend, because he was almost of her own age, was just what he seemed, was friendly and honest and—might be anything. That fascinated her—the things that he might be.

She knew also that he was in love with her. No one else was—no one else in the whole world. And no one else was young. He was attractive, always clean, however grubby his hands might be from his work.

"Hullo!" he said, and grinned. "I'm just going to the garage. Like to come?"

"No. I don't think so. It's nearly tea-time. Funny it isn't colder, the sky looking as it does."

He stared into her face. "You're not looking very gay."

"I'm not feeling very gay. Do you feel very gay always?"

"No. I'm damned if I do."

She smiled. "You *are* eloquent!"

"What's the matter?" he asked abruptly. "Don't tell me if you don't want to, but your being happy means a lot."

"Why should it matter to you whether I'm happy or not?"

"Oh, I don't know. It just does."

It was growing darker, and he moved toward her, staring into her face.

"I'm glad someone cares!" she said bitterly. She moved as though she would go away.

He touched her sleeve. "Don't go, for a moment. We never talk. Not since that day on the moor. . . . Yes, I understand. You're lonely. No people of your own age about—except me," he added.

"Well—there it is. It will be all right. It's a comfort to say something to somebody."

He came very close to her. She could feel his breath on her cheek.

"But I don't want you to be unhappy. I can't bear it. I keep thinking about it. I want to make you happy. You're so beautiful and so young, it isn't right for you to be unhappy. It isn't right, and it mustn't be."

The words came from him breathlessly. He caught her shoulders in his hands, kissed her on the mouth, turned and went out of the wood.

YOUNG Simon Brenford had, on this particular afternoon, mistaken the hour of his mother's sewing-party. For this reason or that, it was to be at four-thirty instead of three-thirty.

Dorothy, standing at the window of the schoolroom, watching the blue-gray dusk, was thinking about Jim Burfer. She was wondering what Jim Burfer was doing.

Gilbert, seated on a tip-tilted chair at the table with the shabby green cloth, was wondering about Jim Burfer too. But in quite another fashion from Dorothy. He was wondering when Jim would give him another lesson in modeling.

The door opened, and Simon came in. It was obvious at once that something had happened to him.

He had never in his life seen any human being kiss another as Jim Burfer had kissed Mrs. Corwell. He did not, of course, think it shocking or immoral. There had, however, been something very strange in the kissing of Mrs. Corwell by Jim Burfer, something very strange also in the way Jim had rushed from the wood, something very strange in Mrs. Corwell's face as she stood there afterward without moving.

Simon had crept away and then run home. He wanted to tell someone about it and discover what it had really meant. He would ask Jim Burfer as soon as he saw him.

He said very little to his brother and sister. He went to the bedroom that he shared with Gilbert, to take off his overcoat. Coming out, he encountered his mother, who was going downstairs to receive her guests.

"Why, Simon! Haven't you had your tea?"

"No, Mother." Then he said slowly: "I've been in Mr. Corwell's garden."

"You naughty boy—I told you—"

He was staring at her with excitement.

"I was in the little wood, and Jim Burfer was there, and Mrs. Corwell. I was hiding to give Jim a surprise, but he kissed Mrs. Corwell and ran away."

Mrs. Brenford stopped on the top of the stairs.

"What!"

She stood staring at her small son. . . .

The ladies had already arrived. After a little pleasant conversation they settled down to their tea.

Mrs. Lamplough was sitting in a chair by the fire. Daisy Brenford touched her arm.

"Alice, come over here a moment. I've something to tell you."

ON a certain afternoon in December, Celia decided to call on Mrs. Mark. It was the first day of winter. The sky was snow-blue, the air still with a sting of frost. Scent was keen. Celia was made happy by the weather.

She rang the door-bell. Mrs. Mark herself appeared.

"Why, Mrs. Corwell! How delightful!"

Celia was depressed and lonely; she was therefore on her dignity. She felt warm toward Mrs. Mark, but because the old ladies in Garth did not like her, she would be the grand Mrs. Corwell. She was, in fact, as she walked graciously into the cottage, like a child dressed up in her mother's clothes.

And she found other children there—the three Brenford children seated at the tea-table. She drew back.

"Oh, I didn't know—"

Celia saw Simon staring at her, then grinning. She saw Dorothy smiling shyly. She saw Gilbert, whom she knew very little, staring apprehensively, his hand on the collar of a ridiculous mongrel dog.

"You see, it's Dorothy's birthday," Mrs. Mark said, "and Mr. and Mrs. Brenford have to be in Polchester, so—"

"That's a nice shy girl," Celia thought. "I've always liked her." And, impulsively, as she did everything, she unclasped the necklace of tiny seed pearls round her throat, and went up to Dorothy, holding it out.

"My birthday present is very late, but most sincere."

"Oh, no, I couldn't. I really—I mustn't—"

"Please."

"Oh, I couldn't! I couldn't! Mother won't let me!"

Celia smiled grimly.

"Don't tell your mother who gave it you. Just say it was a present."

But the mention of Mrs. Brenford reminded her of her married dignity again. She pressed the necklace into Dorothy's hand and then sat down rather stiffly. She knew that the party had been gay just before she entered, and was gay no longer.

Things were not going well. Mrs. Mark wished, in her heart, that Celia Corwell had come on any other day but this one. The situation was saved, however, by Celia's extraordinary appetite. The children watched her with amazement. They had always believed that only *they* were greedy, that grown-up mature persons ate chiefly from a sense of duty. Now they beheld Mrs. Corwell eat crumpets, three or more, then spread brown bread with cream and blackberry jelly, then devour honeycomb, then saffron cake and then say, quite brightly: "Dorothy, it's about time you cut that cake!"

Afterward they cleared all the tea-things away and played games. Celia played the piano for them to dance to; she hid with Simon in a cupboard in Mrs. Mark's bed-

room during Hide and Seek, and very strange feelings stole over her as she held his thick strong little body close to her, for the cupboard was small. Would she have a child one day? That would put everything right.

When it was all over, Celia stood in the middle of the room, clapped her hands and cried:

"I know! I know! We'll have a wonderful Christmas party at Garth House and ask everybody.

Her eyes shone, her cheeks flushed, her body danced with happiness. All the children clapped their hands.

Chapter Twelve

ONE morning there arrived in the post an invitation from Garth House for a Christmas party. Not only were Mr. and Mrs. Brenford invited, but the three children also. An afternoon party. At first Daisy Brenford was determined that they should none of them go. They should not accept hospitality from that wicked woman's hands. On further consideration, she was less certain. Everyone would accept. She liked and admired Mr. Corwell. She was also curious and inquisitive. . . .

It was a night of splendid stars. No one in Garth could remember having seen a night like this in their lives before.

"It's a crackling blue-smoke frost," old Lamplough said to himself, striding along to spend the after-dinner evening with Julius Corwell. On the moor farms, in the hamlets, about the village of Garth itself, people came to their doors and said: "Oh, look at the stars!"

On this night too—but not seeing the stars, for the curtains were drawn—Mrs. Gayner sat writing to her sister. There was a knock on her door.

"Come in," she said, pushing the sheets under the blotting-paper.

The door opened, and to her great surprise Jim Burfer stood there.

"What is it?" she asked. "Anything I can do?"

"No. I don't know that there is. Something I ought to tell you, though."

He leaned on the table toward her, and smiled kindly.

"I've been having a talk with your son."

"Oh—" She half rose, her hand at her throat.

"Now, Mrs. Gayner. Please!" He put out his hand, and for a moment touched her soft one. "Don't be frightened. I won't give you away."

"How did you know?"

"Well, he stole my gold pencil."

"Oh, what am I to do? What am I to do?" Mrs. Gayner cried. "It's only got one ending."

"Yes, it's only got one ending, Mrs. Gayner. He must leave here."

"I've been trying. I was ready to give him the money for Jamaica, where I've a cousin who would help him, but he won't go."

"Why don't you tell Mr. Corwell? He thinks the world of you. He's ever so kind. Better he should hear it from you, than from someone else."

"Yes, I've thought of it often and often. But there's Mrs. Corwell. She doesn't like me, I'm afraid. If she knew—"

"Does he come here?"

"Yes, I'm afraid he does."

"When does he come, and how?"

"At night. There's a ladder in the tool-shed. He comes in by the window."

"That isn't so good. Do you give him money?"

"A little now and again."

She looked at him quite beseechingly.

"Well, you tell me if you're in trouble. I've been about the world quite a bit, you know."

He got up and smiled.

After he was gone she took out her letter again. But she couldn't continue it.

Downstairs, Julius and old Lamplough stood at the window of the study. The curtains had been drawn back. The stars blazed down over the dark deep well of the lawn. Celia was standing a little behind them. Julius had his hand on Lamplough's arm.

"I'm off to bed," Celia said. "The stars make me sleepy. Besides, I know that you two talk better without me."

She held out her hand. "Good night, Mr. Lamplough."

When she was gone, he returned to Julius, but this time he put his hand, the veins of which were purple and swollen, on Julius' shoulder.

"Pity you can't see them. I can't remember ever a night like this one. It must be some special keenness of the frost."

"The funny thing is," Julius said, "it is as though I could smell them—a whiff of gunpowder. They are dangerous, Lamplough. Dangerous. War leans on the edge of the sky. Don't you feel it?"

"Perhaps I do. But I'm too old to care."

"Not about mankind?"

"Mankind! Not I! Why, you're the only human being I've liked for years. I'm nearly dead. I loathe and despise mankind for the mess they've made of this enchanting, entrancing world. These stars! Why are we made to feel their beauty and majesty so desperately?"

"Give yourself a whisky—me one too."

Lamplough filled the glasses while Julius lay back.

"Sit down, you bitter old man, and give me some advice."

Lamplough, looking with his scanty gray hair on end, like a malicious bird, sat down.

"I'm very good at advice. Having made a complete mess of my life, I'm an excellent counselor."

Julius stared into his own world.

"You say you've made a mess of your life. I don't suppose you have. None of us can tell until it's all over. But I'm in a fair way, I think, to make a mess of mine."

"How?" asked Lamplough.

"I love my wife with heart, soul, body, everything I have. I love her more every day I live. I have reason to believe she loves me. And yet, with every day in this place, we are drifting further apart."

"You haven't been married very long."

"No. I know that, and all about the first year being the hardest, and the rest of it. At the same time, I *don't* know it, for my other marriage had no difficulties at all. It was supremely happy, and yet I didn't love Elinor as I love Celia. I've spoken of this," Julius went on quickly, "to no other living human being."

"I know what you're thinking. That I'm married to the worst gossip in England."

"No. I wasn't thinking that. I shouldn't be talking at all if I didn't feel I was talking to myself."

"That's a great compliment," Lamplough grunted.

"The trouble is, I'm in a fog. I came down here the happiest man in the United Kingdom. It seemed to me that nothing could go wrong. But how queer a thing marriage is! Celia's bitterly disappointed now."

"Why is she disappointed?"

"She married me with the romantic notion that she was going to help me. She was, of course, in love with me as well, but it was my blindness that touched all her generosity and kindness. I was so crazily in love with her that I thought of nothing but that. I knew that my blindness made me queer at times, but I thought that she would get used to that. I shouldn't have married her. It was a crime. I didn't know it, but now I see it."

"Yet you love one another," Lamplough said.

"Yes, that makes it harder; for never before have I loathed my blindness as I do now. If I could see—if I could see! Oh, God, if I could see!"

There was a silence; then Lamplough said: "I think that's melodrama, Corwell. You're damned lucky to love one another as you do."

He got up rather clumsily and went over to Julius, put a hand for a moment on his shoulder. "She'll grow. She's fine. You're fine. You can't go wrong."

Just before he went away, he said:

"Take your blindness as a gift, not a penalty."

Chapter Thirteen

DOROTHY awoke on that particular morning, knowing that something very special was in store for her.

"Oh, it's the party!"

She jumped out of bed to run to the window—to find that it was the most sinister of all possible days. Rain was pouring down from a sky so heavy that it seemed to be composed of muddy mattresses. However, what did it matter? It would be indoors; the grimier the exterior, the more cozy inside.

The rain had ceased when they started off, and the sky had broken its gray with little furrows of blue. Inside the drawing-room, Dorothy stood lost in wonder.

The room had been cleared, but on the walls were still hanging the old water-colors in their gold frames, to give everything a friendly air. The light was soft and glowing. Garlands of red-berried holly were hanging from wall to wall, and at the far end by the window was a magnificent Christmas tree.

Tea and coffee were being carried round by the maids.

Very soon she saw Jim Burfer, in his dark blue suit, helping with cake and bread and butter. Almost at once he was passing her, and he stopped.

"Well, I never! Why aren't you having some tea?"

He perhaps felt something in her serious gaze. Among all those grown-up people, all talking and gesturing, falsely he thought, this child in her shabby frock ("Why doesn't her mother buy her a new dress?" he thought quite angrily) was apart and better than they.

"We've only just come," Dorothy said.

"Look here: If you want some food, go over to that little table near the Christmas tree. There's no one sitting there."

"Oh, thanks most awfully," Gilbert said politely. What he longed to ask Jim was whether he would give him another lesson in modeling soon. He hadn't seen Jim for several weeks. Then Jim remembered.

Before he hurried away, he said: "What about the modeling? I'll be over one of these days soon."

"Oh, thanks most awfully!"

The three children reached their table; but to their horror, old Mrs. Lamplough sat down at the same time.

"I'm not going to stand any longer; I'm an old woman. Much better to have a sit-down tea."

Then they saw Julius Corwell. He was standing, with Celia's arm through his, talking to Miss Vergil and Phyllis Larch.

IT was Celia's afternoon or, at least, she was determined to make it so. Such an occasion lit some fire within her, so that she felt that exaltation alive within all of us when our personal talent is precisely demanded. This was the thing for which she was destined. To make everything go, to see that everyone was happy. They were making a lot of noise with their chatter, but really, what a collection! Mrs. Ironing in her velvet; Miss Vergil with brass buttons all down her flat chest; Mrs. Brenford, a Juno in a small pork-pie hat; old Mrs. Lamplough in her dingy bonnet! Celia had to confess, without prejudice, that her own two men were like eagles to crows. That poor boy, Jim Burfer, who looked at her as though he could eat her (she did hope that nobody else was noticing!) and of course Julius, with his splendid body and grand head. He was the center of everything, always.

Then she actually forgot him. She remembered nothing but her determination to make the party go. She determined perhaps a little too much. She stood near the Christmas tree and clapped her hands. Then, when everyone was silent, she cried out in her clear childlike voice:

"Now we're going to dance to the gramophone. And everyone has to dance! There's room for everybody!"

Celia went about the room urging everyone to dance, speaking to them in fact as though she had known them all her life! Julius had danced with her for a little while, she guiding him with great skill; then he retired quietly to a corner, sat down on a little sofa set back against the wall, and listened to all the sounds, the music, the voices.

A hand touched his arm, and a voice said: "It's Katherine Mark."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" He turned, smiling, toward her.

"You didn't *look* pleased when you heard me sitting down."

"I didn't know it was you."

"I had to come and tell you how beautiful Celia is looking, and how happy."

"Yes. I could tell from her voice just now that she was happy."

"The whole thing is the greatest success."

"Are you enjoying it?" he asked.

"Immensely. I love to see people happy. I am getting especial pleasure from watching Dorothy."

"Dorothy?"

"Dorothy Brenford. You know, Mr. Corwell, it's wonderful to reach the age when you can love someone without being possessive. Being possessive is the root of all evil. I'm still a little possessive about my son, I'm afraid, but not in the least about Dorothy. She is a darling—quite unaware of her own merits, generous-hearted, enjoying everything."

She got up. "Mr. Lamplough seems to want me about something. He's making signs to me."

After she was gone, he too stood up. The gramophone was playing the "Danube" waltz, which even now, after so many years and endless repetition, was fresh and lovely; the most beautiful waltz in the world.

A voice said in his ear: "You should watch Jim Burfer with your wife. There are fine goings-on."

FROM JULIUS CORWELL'S JOURNAL

January 7.

It has not been strange in the circumstances, I suppose, that my mind should have dwelt much on the question as to who it was whispered in my ear on the afternoon of the party. It is not strange, either, that I should at first have decided that it was Mrs. Lamplough, she being the core or heart of the village gossip. So I asked the Lamploughs to tea.

When they came, Celia was out: I had to apologize.

I had, of course, never seen Mrs. Lamplough, but her clothes always smelt of moths. The purr of her voice was pure animal. I mean a physical sound, without humanity.

She spun an unbroken web of chatter. I, quite suddenly, knew that it was not she who had spoken to me at the party. There was something in her voice that could not possibly disguise it from me—no, not for one sentence.

January 12.

I am ill. I have been ill for half an hour. I am very seldom ill, have not an ache or a pain. But half an hour ago, as Celia began to read to me, a pain, a little pain, crept into the skin of my forehead between my eyes. I asked her to stop reading. Once again she was hurt by my abruptness, and went up to bed.

January—I don't know what.

I have no decency to be writing. When I was laid here I insisted, half delirious as I was, that my padlocked *Journal* and my best photograph of Celia should be put on the table beside my strange bed. (They have put me into the Orange Room, the room for visitors, with the orange wallpaper and the ebony furniture. I hate, hate this room.)

Celia was in her dressing-room. Lizzie Gayner found me trying to crawl upstairs to my room. She and Oliphant undressed me.

I was in bed when Celia came in. I remember little more. It has been a sharpish attack of influenza. There is a danger of pleurisy. I have spent most of the days in dreaming, but Lizzie Gayner said half an hour ago: "Now straight off to sleep, mind." And here I am, the moment she was gone, finding the key in my match-box, unlocking the *Journal* and sitting up with my head like a swollen apple-pudding, writing.

Chapter Fourteen

TO all of us, even the most insensitive, there come days, or only hours perhaps, when danger threatens us so nearly that every step taken, every word spoken, seems full of risk. Not definite and named danger; there is rather a general danger in the air.

It was so for Celia on this fourteenth of January. At the moment of waking, she said aloud: "I've got to be very careful today."

The room was dark. Violet had not yet arrived to call her; she came and drew the blinds back, in the January half-light; at that moment the furniture seemed to settle itself down as though it had been alive and stirring in the dark.

"What's the matter, Violet?"

"You know that funny little man in the village, ma'am?"

"No, of course I don't. What little man?"

"The one who always goes about in a waterproof with a lot of dogs at his heels."

"Oh, yes. I've seen him."

"He was in the garden last night."

"What?"

"He was, ma'am, really. I saw him myself. It was my night off."

"What an extraordinary thing! All right, I'll wear the blue. . . . That's all. I'll turn the bath on myself."

In the afternoon Celia encountered Miss Vergil near the post office.

"How's Mr. Corwell?"

"Oh, he's better, thank you."

"Out of bed?"

"Oh, no. He had a touch of pleurisy."

Miss Vergil, who was looking in her man's hat and severe tweeds like an old soldier in mufti, muttered with her gruff casualness:

"Mrs. Corwell, I oughtn't to say this, I suppose—damned cheek, no doubt. I know you don't like any of us, and I dare say you're right; but I'd rather be friendly than not. What I mean is, if I ever can be any sort of help, you can rely on me."

"Thanks very much," Celia said, surprised.

"Yes. I've made a muck of my life on the whole. Not that that interests you. But you can trust me. So long."

And she turned and walked, as though she were on parade, down the street.

At home again Celia took off her things and went in to see her husband. He was fast asleep, lying on his side, his mouth a little open, helpless as a baby. Mrs. Gayner was sitting near the bed. She got up when Celia came in. Celia shook her head and then motioned with her hand toward the door.

The two women went together into the passage.

"He's sleeping."

"Yes, I see that he is. He's ever so much better, isn't he?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am."

"Ah, that's good! . . . Mrs. Gayner."

"Yes ma'am?"

"Something worries me. Have you seen a little man in the village? He always wears a waterproof and goes about with a lot of dogs."

"Well, ma'am, I'm not sure—"

"Violet says she saw him in the garden last night. It was her evening out."

"It certainly *is* upsetting," Mrs. Gayner said.

"If you hear anything, will you let me know?"

"Certainly I will."

Celia had her dinner alone, and her uneasiness increased. She hated to eat alone. Nothing made her feel so melancholy and deserted. After dinner she went up to see Julius again and talked to him for a little. Then she went back to the study and began to read.

AFTER Julius' supper, when Celia had left, he fell into a light sleep. He was asleep and yet not asleep; he was dreaming and yet not dreaming. Someone was playing his favorite of all the Beethoven Sonatas, Opus 31, No. 1. It was played superbly, malicious, humorous happiness falling in a shower of notes touching his eyes, opening them, so that he stared in passionate delight at the room he had never seen before, stared with wonder at the high white walls, the wide open windows, and beyond them a night sky of stars such as old Lamplough had once seen in his company.

"How loving, how tender Beethoven really must have been!" he said. "He was deaf—but not blind."

"But you are blind no longer," Lamplough said. "You have succeeded in breaking into that other world at last."

"Will I be able to see now always?" Julius asked.

"Yes, if you like. It's your own affair. It depends on your faith in reality."

"Then," Julius cried radiantly, "I need never be anxious or afraid again. Is Celia coming?"

"If you can persuade her."

The music had stopped, and following it, there was so full a peace as Julius had never before known. "How long it is," he thought, "since I have seen a face! And now I shall be able to watch Celia's eyes."

But now he was awake. He turned on his side, and from his repeater learned that it was half-past eleven.

He was much, much better. The dry sharp pain in his chest was gone. He pressed his hands on his body, his chest, his arms, his legs. His body was cool again and strong.

He sat up. An idea came to him. He smiled in the darkness. Carefully he got out of bed, felt for his soft wool slippers, walked gingerly to the chair where his dressing-gown was. He was weak, of course. His legs trembled a little. He felt his way to the door. He stood there, smiling. Then he opened it.

CELIA could not sleep. She turned on her light and tried to interest herself in her book.

"I'm an awful fool," she said suddenly out loud; "but then, I'm young, ill-educated, spoiled. How can I improve myself?"

The trouble was that she was not sure whether she wanted to! Her youth was so very charming and would be gone so soon. She had not, she decided, lying back with her arms behind her head, yet reached the moment when youth and age discover a common understanding. She still could not understand the aged. She *loved* Julius, she thought, leaning over and considering the empty bed, but did not understand him. At that she was miserable and lonely again. She wanted someone—almost anyone—to take her in his arms and comfort her.

She heard the click of the door. She turned sharply, sitting up. It was Jim Burfer. He stood just inside the door. He was wearing only a shirt and trousers—his shirt open at the neck—and shabby red bedroom slippers. His hand was still on the door.

"He's mad," she thought. "I'll call for Julius." But she did not.

At last in a whisper she said: "Jim Burfer! Are you crazy? Get out of here."

"Yes," he answered quietly, "I'm crazy." He closed the door very quietly and came into the room.

"If you don't get out this second, I shall call Mr. Corwell."

"Don't. Don't," he said very gravely. He stood near the window, looking at her. The only light in the room was from her lamp beside her bed.

"I had to see you where no one would disturb us. You've been unkind to me for weeks, so that really this is your own fault. I couldn't help kissing you that day, and I can't help loving you, although I think Mr. Corwell is the finest man I've ever known. You needn't think I've been happy over it. But it isn't to do with ourselves whether we love anyone—"

"You crazy fool!" she broke in. "Stop talking nonsense and get out of here. If I ring this bell—"

He smiled, and came closer to the bed.

"All I'm going to do," he said, "is to sit on this bed and hold your hand and perhaps give you a kiss. Nothing more. I wouldn't hurt you for anything. Tomorrow I'm going away."

Her eyes never left the door.

"Please, please! We'll talk in the morning. We'll settle everything in the morning. Someone can hear."

He came and sat down on the edge of her bed, which was the outside of the two.

"Don't be frightened. No one can hear us with the door shut. Everyone's asleep, aren't they?"

He put his hand out and touched her arm.

She saw the handle of the door turn. She switched off the light. . . .

Julius thought: "I will go in very quietly. I will kiss her very gently. She will never know that I have been there. Perhaps she will dream that I kissed her." So he opened the door very softly, and closed it almost without sound. He stood there, his body trembling a little, for he was weak. He listened for her breathing, and could not hear it.

He took some steps forward and then stopped. He had the fantastic notion that someone was in the room, someone as well as Celia. He shook his head, smiling. He had noticed often that his senses had become so acute since his blindness that a room would seem to him full of people and there would be no one there. A little wind rattled the blind very gently. He moved forward again, and again listened. He stood taut, listening with all his faculties.

Then his second personality, his blind personality, angered him. "There is someone here. There is someone here."

He turned back, found the door again, and began to move along the wall, touching it with his hand. There was nobody there—of course there was nobody there. But he would make sure.

His nose was sharp. He could smell substances that to the normal man had no odor here—something of tobacco

and earth and a man's clothing. At that thought his heart jumped and was still. A man! A man!

He began now, stealthily, as though he were tracking something down, to move along the wall. He knew everything in this room, the exact position of everything. Here was the long wardrobe. He opened it very stealthily and passed his hand among the clothes. No one was here. He came to the other window, opposite the beds, touched the curtain, and with the next movement, his hand was against a cold throbbing cheek.

He paused there and drew a deep sighing breath. Then his hand moved, almost caressingly, over the face. He felt the cheek, the forehead, then the hair.

"Burfer!" he said.

His brain was amazingly clear. This was a familiar scene; he had been through it, it seemed to him, before. In plays and novels you "crashed" your fist into the fellow's face. His arms, though, had fallen to his sides. All he said was: "What are you doing here, Jim?"

The well-known familiar voice answered: "I came to ask Mrs. Corwell something."

"An odd time, wasn't it?"

"I meant nothing. Mrs. Corwell didn't know—"

"You'd better get out."

"Yes, Mr. Corwell."

Someone moved quickly across the floor. The door opened, was closed.

Julius turned toward the bed. He was fearfully tired. His legs shook so that he was not sure of himself, and he sat down on the edge of the empty bed.

"You awake, Celia?"

"I didn't know he was coming, Julius. I didn't! I didn't! I was reading. I couldn't sleep. He came in and stood there looking at me and began to talk a lot of nonsense. I was furious and told him to get out. But he wouldn't. He said he was going away tomorrow and wanted—" She stopped.

"Yes. Wanted what?"

"Wanted to kiss me before he went. He said he'd been in love with me since he came here, and it was terrible because he thought you the finest man he'd ever known. That's why he was going away."

"I see. Has he ever been in here before?"

"No. Never."

"Has he ever kissed you?"

There was a long pause.

"Yes. Once."

"When?"

"Several weeks ago. In the garden."

"I see. Were you angry with him?"

"Of course. Furious."

"But you didn't tell me."

"Julius, you must, you must believe—I didn't—I couldn't—I love you so much."

This was all horrible to him. He must get away. He must be by himself, quite alone.

He got up. "Somebody told me—"

"What did somebody tell you?"

"That you and Jim Burfer—"

"There was nothing to tell. Nothing, nothing."

He stood thinking. . . . "Good night," he said.

After she heard the door close, she began to cry, miserably, with childish crying.

Chapter Fifteen

WITHIN twenty-four hours the news was everywhere. Mr. Corwell had discovered Jim Burfer in Mrs. Corwell's room, had thrashed him "within an inch of his life" (the settled "scandal phrase"), thrown him out of the window. Jim had disappeared.

The only quite certain fact in the whole matter was that Jim Burfer had disappeared. Beyond this, nothing was *really* known. From the house itself there was no word.

Within those twenty-four hours the whole village condemned her. There was not a voice that murmured in her favor.

Four days after Jim's disappearance, they were all at the Rectory—the usual time, four to six. Gladys Ironing, Alice Lamplough, May Vergil, Phyllis Larch, their hostess Daisy Brenford.

They were working round the table. Mrs. Lamplough was almost sunk under a black coal-scuttle hat. Phyllis very girlish, was wearing no hat. May Vergil beside her was wearing a soft white collar and a buff waistcoat. She looked like an aging male impersonator. Mrs. Ironing would look up at the window, stare at the sun as though she had never seen it before, and then murmur something about her sewing, or life in general. Daisy Brenford, her head up, her chest out, declared:

"If we let a thing like this pass—"

"A thing like what?" May Vergil asked.

Her question made everyone jump—spiritually jump. For everyone had been comfortable.

"May, dear," said Phyllis.

Miss Vergil fixed her martial eye on Mrs. Brenford.

"I want to know, Daisy. A thing like what?"

May Vergil was in a temper. Everyone knew the sign. The fourth brass button on her waistcoat trembled ever so slightly. However, Daisy was no coward.

"A thing like what, May? A thing like adultery—"

"Now, now. Stick to facts, Daisy. Who *says* that she has committed adultery?"

Daisy threw up her head and took a firm stand.

"I'm not one, as you all know, to say anything against anyone that isn't true. Everyone will grant me that. I've no intention of discussing the facts. I simply say that Mrs. Corwell is not a fit woman for my children or for anyone who believes in decent behavior, to know."

"Ha!" May Vergil had a peculiar little snort all her own when she was hot on the track of a criminal. "That's all I wanted to know. You have no facts, Daisy. No one has any facts. All that anyone is certain of is that Jim Burfer has left the village, and *that's* a good riddance. As to Mrs. Corwell, anyone with half an eye can see that she's devoted to her husband. In any case, it's their business, not *ours.*"

Daisy Brenford was furious. Her bosom rose and fell most handsomely. She had never been scolded by May Vergil in public before.

"I have always thought, May, that you are pretty lax about these things."

"To hell with what you think!" May Vergil rose so abruptly that her chair fell over. She banged the door behind her. There was general consternation. This was most serious. This was a real breach in the social life of the community. Everyone went home long before the appointed time.

YES, most certainly, one thing *does* lead to another. The lives of at least five people might have been altogether different had the little Pardoes not happened to pay a call directly after the ladies left the Rectory.

Daisy Brenford stood alone in her drawing-room, so very angry that her legs trembled and her throat was dry as hayseed.

The root of her anger was her shocked astonishment at May Vergil's indifference to immorality. And to be insulted in that way before Mrs. Lamplough! This was a sharp sword piercing Daisy's bosom.

At that moment through the half-open door Benson looked in. The children had gone for a walk with their father—a great occasional event which they hugely enjoyed.

But without Gilbert, Benson was lost; without Gilbert he was alone in a world of enemies. Beyond that there was always, when Gilbert was gone, the awful fear that he would never return.

Daisy, seeing the dog, hated him. She had never liked him. Her good-natured weakness had pandered to Gilbert. She gave him one look, and he fled.

A moment later the little Pardoes were introduced. They were always known as "the little Pardoes" because, both physically and spiritually, they were little indeed. Mrs. Pardoe was the widow of a clergyman who had been knocked down by a steam-roller and killed.

When they visited Daisy Brenford, they came as though to the Queen of Sheba, and Daisy liked that. She was always kind to them, and gave Mrs. Pardoe old clothes discarded by Gilbert and Simon.

Now she ordered tea and suffered her anger to be changed into graciousness.

"Oh, dear Mrs. Brenford! No—no. Oh, no indeed! We didn't mean you to bother about tea—we didn't, indeed. And we mustn't stay. Just a bite, and we're off!"

But the tea was being brought in; and the Pardoes, without knowing it, followed the rather rickety little table that held the bread and butter, the plum cake, the strawberry jam, with anxious eyes.

And at that moment Benson actually shuffled (for his walk, when he was embarrassed, *was* a kind of shuffle) into the room. The fact was, he was desperate—he had been from end to end of the house, looking for his master.

At once Lucy Pardoe cried: "Oh, what a lovely little dog!"

"Do you like him?" Mrs. Brenford asked, with beaming patronage.

"Oh, yes," Lucy said, shrinking into herself, for she had seen, after one glance from her mother, that she had forgotten her manners.

"Well, you can have him!"

Here was a solution: She hated the dog; it was doing Gilbert no good; she would tell Gilbert that on his next birthday he should have a *real* dog—a puppy of good breeding.

"Oh, no!" Mrs. Pardoe broke in. "We couldn't, really."

"You'll be doing us a kindness. Gilbert picked him up in the road somewhere. He's quite good about the house, no trouble really, but it takes Gilbert's mind off his work. He's not much to look at, I'm afraid—the dog, I mean; the children call him Benson."

At the moment of departure, Benson refused to go. He stood with his feet firmly planted, looking with agonized despair across the village green. However, a piece of cord was discovered, and the Pardoes departed, leading Benson with little chirrups of reassurance and comfort. . . .

The children greatly enjoyed the walk with their father. He was always at his best when he was alone with them. He strode along, and Simon ran ahead with spirited bursts in order to keep up with them. Their father talked without ceasing, and much that he said they did not understand.

But Dorothy and Gilbert were not very happy, in spite of the beauty of the day and their pleasure at being with their father. Something had happened. One event at least was clear: Jim Burfer was gone. Gilbert was very sorry, because he liked him, and because now he would not teach him modeling. But there was more than that: Gilbert, like all sensitive adolescent boys, was very lonely. Jim Burfer *was* a friend, and he had none other save Dorothy and, of course, Benson.

He was pleased when his father turned abruptly and started back toward Garth.

"Time to go home! Time to go home! Tea! Tea!"

FOR Dorothy there was alarm, threatening danger in the air. Why had Jim Burfer gone so suddenly, in the middle of the night, as it were? Had there been a quarrel? About what were her elders and betters whispering?

She must discover where he was, why he had gone. Had he money, food? Was he perhaps needing her, thinking her faithless? She hurried beside her father, seeing nothing but Jim's face, hearing nothing but his voice.

She was taking off her things in her bedroom when her mother abruptly entered.

"How late you are! It's too bad of your father."

The door burst open. Gilbert stood there.

"Mother, where's Benson?"

She felt for the first time in her life frightened of her son.

"Now, Gilbert, don't make such a fuss. It's perfectly all right. Your father and I will buy you a dog on your birthday."

"*Buy* me a dog?" His voice was breathless. "Where is he? What has happened?" His voice dropped. "Is he dead?"

"Of course he isn't dead! What an idea! The fact is, the Pardoes came to tea. Poor little things, they never have anything, and you have so much. Benson came in, and they liked him, so I said they could have him."

She didn't meet Gilbert's eyes. She went to the door.

"Now, children, that's enough of all this. Come and have your tea."

But Gilbert caught his mother by the arm. He shook her. He screamed: "You gave Benson to the Pardoes? You gave him to the Pardoes? I'll never forgive you. Never! Never!"

He ran past her, out into the passage, tumbling, stumbling, down the stairs.

Chapter Sixteen

IT had been always Celia's practice to sulk when people—parents, loving young men, female friends—were angry with her. Celia loved Julius, and therefore she realized that something very terrible had occurred, whether she were wronged or no. But wronged she was! She had committed no crime. She had not been even indiscreet. Her whole attention was concentrated on Julius.

She went to his bedroom on the morning following the absurd affair. She kissed him, and because he could not see her, put as much dignity into her voice as it would hold.

"Julius, I haven't slept at all. I'm very unhappy. But I had nothing to do with his coming into my room last night. I was horrified. I understand that he's gone. No one has seen him this morning."

She realized then that she had to do with a Julius whom she had never seen before. For some while he did not speak. At last, staring at her and beyond her, he said:

"Please. Please." Then he raised his voice. "It's not a thing to discuss—now or ever."

She shrugged, and without another word, she left the room. . . .

The next thing that happened was that she lost her temper with Violet and dismissed her. But as soon as it was done, Celia regretted it. What a foolish thing! She had been friendly with the girl, and told her many things that she should not. The girl would gossip, talk maliciously.

One day Celia walked into the village and saw Phyllis Larch coming toward her. Celia smiled and hurried her step, but Phyllis turned down a little lane between cottages. So that was it, was it? They were cutting her.

But a day later she encountered Miss Vergil, who was very friendly.

"I wonder whether you would have tea with me one afternoon, Mrs. Corwell."

"I should love to. You'd better not ask anyone else, though."

"Why not?"

"They are all cutting me."

"Oh, nonsense! You know what little places like this are."

"It all began," Celia said slowly, "with someone whispering in Julius' ear at our Christmas party. I wish I knew who it was."

Miss Vergil was interested. She had not heard this.

"I wonder who that was—a caddish thing to do. I wonder—" She ended: "Pay no attention. You *will* come to tea, won't you?"

"Of *course* I will."

This encouraged her. She had this friend at least.

On a fine afternoon she asked Julius whether he would go for a walk. Her hand through his arm, they wandered up the leafy lane toward the moor. She was determined that she should establish some connection with him—an angry one, a brutal one: anything to bridge this dreadful gulf. But when they started homeward, she had achieved nothing. She was very miserable; but they were almost home again when she burst out:

"What have I done? Why won't you say? I'd rather you were furious and turned me out of the house. I've done nothing. That's the ridiculous part. It wasn't my fault that Jim Burfer came into my room. I've done no wrong. I haven't! I *haven't!*"

"Please, Celia. It's no good."

"Why is it no good? Aren't we married? Didn't we—don't we love one another? If you don't love me any more, say so, and I'll go back to London."

He said very slowly: "I can't help myself. You must give me time."

"Time? Why should there be any time? It's weeks now. It's dreadful. I'm all alone here. If you don't love me—if you don't love me—"

The words choked her. They were at the gate of the drive. He walked forward.

She cried so that anyone might hear:

"It isn't fair! I'll go home! I'll go home!"

And she ran down the drive into the house, leaving him to find his way himself.

But she didn't go. She found to her own surprise that now, more than ever before, she didn't want to be away from him.

Chapter Seventeen

SIMON had made a small room in the attic entirely his own. No one knew or cared about this place. It was the smallest room of three, but it had a good-sized window and a deal table and two very rickety chairs. What he greatly enjoyed was to enter this room very quietly, lock the door, balance himself on one of the rickety chairs, and either write in the "detective book" or sit, with a face of grim seriousness, "thinking." His thoughts were not very connected, and sometimes he fell asleep with his head on the table.

Until now his life had been one long sequence of gayety and enjoyment. In the last month, however, trouble had come to him, and trouble with which it was not easy to deal:

In the first place, he was not seeing Mr. Corwell. He had been to Garth House twice in the last three weeks, and on neither occasion had he been welcome. It was not that Mr. Corwell had been unkind. He had greeted him as he had always done, but something was wrong.

As bad as this, was the unhappiness in his own family. His mother was unhappy; Dorothy was unhappy; Gilbert was unhappy. Simon's real disturbing distress was for Gilbert, who was unhappy because his mother had given Benson to the Pardoes; and this Simon could understand completely.

After a very serious "thinking" in his attic and a number of scribbles and screamingly funny drawings of the Pardoes in his "detective book," Simon went out quietly. With the manner of a sleuth, stepping lightly, looking cautiously about him, he disappeared. Safely on the village green, he was pleased to see that there was no one else about. He moved away down the road. He was, for his age, a most excellent walker. He was greatly pleased with himself.

He was yet better pleased when, half a mile along, he came up with a cart filled with sacks, drawn by a plodding horse, and Mr. Seabanks, a farmer and a friend of his, seated somnolently in front of it.

He greeted Mr. Seabanks and asked for a lift. The Seabanks farm was less than a mile from the Pardoes. Mr. Seabanks, a stout, heavy, red-faced man, lifted him up, sat him down and asked him a question or two. Where was he going? How were his father and mother? And once he asked suspiciously why Simon was going so far from home, but Simon answered that it was a secret.

"You're young to have secrets. Does your mother know?"

But Simon grinned, and when the Seabanks farm was in sight, requested to be lifted down, thanked his host very politely and started up a side lane.

Now began the exciting and enchanting part of his adventure. He not only felt like a detective; he *was* a detective. He walked up the lane, then turned into a road, ran for a while, keeping close to a hedge, that he might not be seen.

The Pardoes' house was a mean little place with two protuberances like large inquisitive ears, and a chimney like a swollen nose. Above the door were panes of colored glass, and in front was a small gritty lawn; also two poverty-bare garden beds. In the middle of one of these garden beds Benson was sitting!

Simon could not, for a moment, believe in his luck. He stood back in the hedge and stared at Benson. This dog had never been a beauty; now he was a disgrace. It was clear that his coat had not been brushed for many days, but more than this, his spirit had died within him. There was no other sign of life anywhere. The little breeze blew through the hedges; somewhere a woman called sharply; no human being was to be observed.

Simon acted quickly. He crossed the road, unlatched the little gate and whispered: "Benson!" Even as he did so, he caught the dog in his arms, held him tightly to his chest and moved back across the road.

"WHERE'S Dorothy?" Mrs. Brenford was asking Gilbert.

"I don't know, Mother."

"And Simon?"

"I don't know, Mother."

His cold politeness infuriated her and made her miserable. Life now seemed to be advancing toward her like a masked man threatening her with some awful disaster. She was hemmed in by discontent, malice and all uncharitableness—she who only six months ago had been the lovely, radiant Daisy Brenford, whom everyone loved. She went out.

Five minutes later Simon appeared in the doorway. He whispered: "Gillie, quick!"

"What is it?"

"You'll see!"

He ran up the stairs to the attic, Gilbert following. He put the key in the rusty lock. He drew Gilbert in and shut the door behind them.

Lying on his belly, his eyes bright with excitement, his ugly tail wagging, was Benson.

Early on that same afternoon Dorothy had gone out. She wanted to be by herself. She must think, understand if she could, some of the troubles and longings that now besieged her. Ever since the day of Jim Burfer's disappearance, it had been as though she were living inside Garth House. The only person who would understand this was Mrs. Mark, because she too lived, in her heart and mind, inside Garth House. She had said once to Dorothy:

"You are my youth. I recapture it in you. Not that I was like you—I was much more rebellious than you; but because I, an old woman, am fond of you, I am young again through you. You don't mind that, do you?"

Of course she did not mind it, although she did not understand it. Grown-up people were very strange, but Dorothy was now growing toward them. She had realized that ever since the day when she had looked at her body in the mirror. And this "growing toward them" was deep inside her feeling for Jim Burfer, which was different now from the thing that it had been even a month ago.

Now, in her ill-fitting clothes, she walked quickly—she did not know where. Always now, when she walked, with others or by herself, she looked for Jim Burfer. She was certain that he had not gone very far away.

She had walked without looking about her, and quite suddenly, as though she had been set down there from an airplane, found herself in a deserted place near a village.

It was dark here, and the sky through the trees was like moss. Some animal moved. Twigs crackled. Two dogs ran forward, and then, to her horror, as though it were an evil dream, she saw advancing toward her the little man in the shabby waterproof whom she had always hated. She could not escape.

THE little man stood looking at her and grinning. "It's Henry Sharping," he said. Then as she didn't speak, he went on: "You know me, don't you? We've talked before. I gave your young brother a nice little dog."

She was frightened in a way that was quite new to her. This was unreal, and yet entirely actual—as things are in dreams.

"I can't stay, I'm afraid. I'm late now. I must go home."

"I don't know why, I'm sure. Why, you should be proud to talk to me. I'm all right—see? I've been on the Halls in tip-up towns, too. Song and dance." He smiled and came a step nearer. "I like you—see? Always have, ever since I first came here. But I've never said a word, have I?"

"No. That is—no."

"Well, then—what are you grousing for, eh? You're a nice girl. Ever been kissed—by a man, I mean?"

She had courage and she said, even smiling:

"No. I must go home. Really, I must. We'll have a talk some other time."

"Give us a kiss. It isn't anything. Really, it isn't."

For the first time in her experience of life, Dorothy was aware of a man's physical self. She was aware, and felt a deep recoiling horror, as though, quite suddenly, a veil had been lifted from all existence. Her childhood was ended as he touched her arm.

She had snatched her hand away and turned; she took some quick steps and stumbled. He caught her with his arm, and at his touch she began to tremble: she could not move.

"Don't cry. No. No. Don't cry. I won't hurt you."

His hands hovered about her. Then, as happens always in plays and story-books, but seldom in real life, he was caught by his miserable collar and thrown back, sprawling, into the bushes. For the second time Jim Burfer had made a quite unnaturally prompt and accurate appearance.

The little man picked himself up, turned and ran for his life, the dogs capering joyfully after him.

"Just like a tale in a book," Burfer said, grinning at her. He pulled her up with his strong hand. Her hat lay

on the ground; she was crying; tear-streaks stained her cheeks.

"When I catch that bounder, I'll break his neck. Sorry. Let's sit down for a moment until you recover yourself."

They sat down. She stared at him. She could not believe. She blew her nose.

"I don't know. . . . It can't be real—"

"Easily explained. I'm working at Couper Farm. Been there a week. I saw that little swine passing with his dogs, and I followed him because I wanted to give him a letter—that he could deliver by hand. I was at the edge of the wood when I heard you cry. So it isn't so wonderful."

She caught his broad thick arm. "Oh, Jim! Jim! It's a miracle. I've been thinking of you all the time—all these weeks."

With her hat off, her hair untidy, the tear-smudge on her cheek, she looked a child again. He saw that she had lost all control. She was crying and sobbing. He put his arm round her.

"There. There! It will be all right in a minute. I know you were frightened."

But when she felt his arm about her, she caught his head in her hands and kissed him on his rough unshaven cheek and his mouth. His body grew rigid. He held her for a moment tightly against himself. He stared out above her head, one hand clenched. Then with great gentleness he got up, moved away from her, stood looking kindly at her.

"What a kid you are! You don't know anything."

"I do. It isn't a new idea. I've loved you for ever so long."

He knelt down beside her, touching her hair for a moment.

"No. You think that. You don't know."

She stared at him, then down at the hole in her stocking. "I see," she said.

"Will you do something for me? Do this for me, will you?" He felt in his pocket and produced a damaged envelope. "Will you give this to her when no one's about? Will you? There's nothing wrong in it. But I must see her. I must see her when she's alone, and ask her to forgive me."

Dorothy took the envelope.

"It's Mrs. Corwell."

"Yes, it is."

"It's her you love."

"Yes, it is."

"But it's wrong. She's married."

"I know she is. My God, don't I know!"

Dorothy sighed. She put the letter into her dress.

"Very well, I'll give it her."

"Now I'll see you to the road. You'll be all right then."

She didn't reply. She walked quietly, without saying a word, at his side.

Chapter Eighteen

From Julius' Journal

A STRANGE thing has happened. Yesterday afternoon I was sitting in the study. The sun was beating on my head. I had turned on the famous Schubert Quartet in A Minor, Opus 29. Again I was reminded: "You must *fight* for these lovely things if they are to be secure. Not anybody. But *you. You* must fight." And with irritation, I got up and turned it off before it was ended. At that moment there was a knock on the door, and Violet's successor—Nancy, a *very* simple girl—said:

"Miss Brenford is in the hall, sir, and wishes to see you. Only for a minute, she says."

"*Miss* Brenford? Ask her to come in."

Dorothy Brenford. I didn't know her at all. I have only ever had a few words with her. A nice simple girl, they tell me. The door opened and closed, and a very sweet childlike voice said:

"I beg your pardon—"

"Is that Dorothy Brenford?" I said.

"I'm very glad to see you," I added, smiling. "Because I *can't* see, you draw a chair up." She did. "That's right. Give me your hand."

She did—it was a soft, young girl's hand, but strong in spirit, with character.

"Now. That's splendid. Will you have some tea with me? I was just going to have some." I could tell that she was very nervous.

"Oh no, thank you, Mr. Corwell. I must get back. I don't know whether I'm doing the right thing."

"I'm sure you are."

"It was Mrs. Corwell I really wanted to see."

"I'm afraid she's gone into Polchester for the day. But anything I can do—"

"It's a letter I was asked to give her. I don't like keeping it. I thought you might give it her."

"Of course I will."

"It's from Jim Burfer."

I held the letter in my hand, and knew a monstrous exasperation.

"Did you see Jim Burfer in the village, then?"

"Oh no, Mr. Corwell; it was on the way to Rafiel. I had gone for a walk, and met Jim Burfer."

"What was he doing there?"

"He had been working on a farm for some weeks." She hesitated, and went on: "There's a horrid little man who goes about in the village with a lot of dogs. He gave Gillie one. He came and frightened me, and Jim Burfer was there, just as though it were in a book."

She laughed—the gayest, most natural, merriest laugh.

"So he rescued you, did he?"

"Yes, I suppose he did."

"Who is this horrible little man?"

"I don't know. No one seems to know anything about him, except that his name is Henry Sharping."

"And was he really rude to you?"

"He tried to kiss me."

"He did, did he? We must have him locked up."

"Oh, no! Although I *am* afraid of him. But not to lock him up. Don't you think, Mr. Corwell, being locked up in prison is the most awful thing that can happen to anybody?"

I said—and I can't think why, because really I'm not sentimental about myself: "That's the way I am—being blind."

"I know." Her voice sank to a sort of reverential gravity. And then after a few moments:

"I must be going back. Good-by."

"Good-by." I held out my hand. She put hers in mine, most trustfully, most friendlily. She said huskily: "I think you're wonderful. We all think so."

She went away with a kind of rush. I stood looking into darkness after her.

I felt something in my hand. Jim Burfer's letter! Why, I had forgotten all about it!

Celia came in, and I gave it to her.

"There is a letter for you from Jim Burfer."

My voice did not shake; neither did my hand. My body was so passionless that it might have been made of soap or butter. I was passionless. Celia was to me like the well-known signature to a document.

"Where did you get this?" Celia asked me.

"Dorothy Brenford brought it. She met Burfer by accident in the country somewhere, and he asked her to give it to you. You were out, so she gave it to me."

I felt the edge of the paper against my hand. She was trying to give it back to me.

"I don't want to read it."

I heard her tearing it to pieces.

And she rushed out, slamming the door.

FLURRIES of sea-gulls haunted the village with screams and cries. After days of storm, there came a long day of pause and hush and stillness. Because the air was so very still, the sea could be heard murmuring as though with its fingers on its lips.

Simon, his small stout legs firmly planted, watched one large seagull of dazzling whiteness, with a beak of fresh aromatic crimson, stride about the green. Simon knew that it was forbidden him to stand about on the village green doing nothing. His mother had told him again and again how common it was. But he stood, watching the seagull, because he had so very much to think about.

There was the excitement about Benson: For a whole week he had been confined (with certain surreptitious excursions) in Simon's attic, and no one else, save Gilbert, knew that he was there. How had he been able for so long to keep this secret? Ah, this was the lovely thing! For Simon it was very salt of life—to sustain a mystery.

Simon did not mind at all that Mr. Benson's heart was entirely Gilbert's. Simon had no liking for sentiment that was aimless self-luxury. He liked everything to have its proper place and point....

This brought him to his sister. Dorothy was changing under his eyes. He had seen it coming for a long time. She had returned from a walk on that very afternoon when Simon had rescued Mr. Benson, in great distress. Two days later she summoned Simon into her bedroom. She only did this when there was something of the greatest importance to discuss.

"Simon, I think perhaps I've done a dreadful thing."

"What's the matter?"

"This is what happened. I went for a walk by myself, and that horrid little man that gave Mr. Benson to Gillie—you know?"

Simon nodded.

"He came up and spoke to me. And then he tried to kiss me. It was horrid, and I screamed and fell down, and Jim Burfer suddenly appeared."

"Jim Burfer! Oh, golly!"

"Yes, it was just like a story. He knocked the little man down, and he got up and ran away. Well, then—" She paused and looked at Simon with some doubt. "You won't tell anyone, Simon? You swear it? No one—not Gillie—no one?"

"I swear it," said Simon rather hoarsely.

"I told Jim," Dorothy said very solemnly, "that I loved him more than anyone in the world."

"Oh, you didn't!"

"Yes, I did. Anyway, I do, so why shouldn't I say so?"

"And what did he say?"

"He was most awfully nice, but he loves someone else."

"Yes, I know. Mrs. Corwell," Simon said.

"But he asked me to give her a letter. I said I would." She hesitated. "This is where I think I was awfully silly."

"Didn't you give it to her?"

"No, I didn't. I went over yesterday, and Mrs. Corwell was in Polchester. So I gave it to Mr. Corwell."

"Oh, I say!"

"Yes. Do you think I did a wrong thing? You're very young, Simon, but somehow I can tell you, and I couldn't tell Gillie."

"Did he read it?"

"No, of course not. People don't read other people's letters."

"Then it's all right."

Dorothy sighed. "I don't know. You can never tell, with grown-up people. What I think, Simon, is that Mr. Corwell is awfully unhappy."

"That's what I think too," Simon said.

GILBERT'S secrecy about Benson grew with every day more unpleasant for him. Unlike Simon, he had no pleasure in mystery. His intense shyness did not mean that he was not honest. It was because of his honesty that he was reticent. He would not be false about his emotions, and because of that, he must conceal them because they were so easily wounded.

During all this week of the hiding of Benson, he was on the edge, at every meeting on the stair, at every meal, of exposing the mystery. He detested secrecy, and he hated this one the more, because Simon was enjoying it so greatly.

Clearly this situation could not continue for very long. It did not. One evening, warm and scent-laden, when the spring was hinting that she had her hand on the handle of the door, Gilbert, who should have been in bed, crept out from the decayed conservatory onto the lawn and let Benson loose. At once he disappeared into the warm stirring darkness. Gilbert stood looking at the stars, and wondering from whom he could learn more carving. The Easter holidays would soon be here, and after them he would return to school.

Benson returned out of the darkness. Gilbert picked him up and stealthily passed through the conservatory into the passage. On the turn of the stairs his mother was standing.

Well, it had happened. He was glad. The deception was over. He caught Benson more tightly to him and stared.

"Gillie! But why aren't you in bed?" Then, taking it in: "The dog—"

"Yes. He's been here a week."

"A week?"

"I've been keeping him in the attic." He was resolved that Simon should not be mentioned.

"Come with me."

He followed her into the drawing-room.

"Put that dog down."

He put Benson down.

SHE sat leaning forward and looked at her son. At that moment she hated him. This was the climax to her long-strengthening sense of betrayal.

"Now. Tell me, please—why have you disobeyed your father and myself?"

"I haven't disobeyed. He was fetched back. He was my dog. You gave him away, but he was *my* dog."

"You knew that your father and myself didn't want him here. I stood him as long as I could. What a horrid thing! Dirty! To keep a dog—" She broke off. "But the wickedness. You'll have to be beaten for this. You've never been beaten; we've been too gentle with you. But this disobedience—"

"I don't mind being beaten."

"The dog shall be destroyed."

A quiver ran through his body.

"If you kill Benson, I'll kill *you!*"

"You'll do *what?*"

"You shan't touch Benson. You can do what you like to me. I don't care. But if you touch Benson—"

She got up. She caught Benson by the neck, lifted him. She did not know herself what she was going to do. A moment later Gilbert threw himself on her. He caught at her arm. She threw Benson across the floor; and he landed, greatly to his surprise, against a little table, which fell over. Gilbert was beating at her with both hands. She slapped his face.

They stood apart, each breathing heavily. She had never struck any of her children before. She was horrified. Gilbert also was horrified. A new bond, that was to alter all their relationship in the future, was formed by their mutual horror. For they loved one another.

His face was gray-white, save where she had struck him. He did not move, but stood as though at attention.

"I'm sorry—" she said, looking at him with puzzled eyes, but she was really seeing only herself. "I didn't mean—" Then she said abruptly: "You'd better go to bed now."

He picked up Benson, and without a word went from the room.

After a while, still bewildered and scarcely knowing what she did, she crossed the passage and knocked on her husband's door. He was sitting with his feet stretched out, smoking, reading a novel.

"What is it, my dear?" he asked with the voice of the husband who at this particular moment wishes that he had never married. He looked at her. Then he put down his book.

"What is it? Something's the matter?"

She sat down and began to talk quite incoherently.

"I've struck Gillie—in the face. He's been very naughty. But I lost my temper. I don't know what's the matter. I said this morning when those seagulls were squawking all over the place that something was going to happen. It's that dog—"

"Now, my dear," he said, "begin at the beginning. What seagulls? *What* dog? What's Gillie been doing?"

"What has Gillie been doing?" She repeated his words, staring across at him, bewildered. "You'll never believe when I tell you. He stole the dog back, and has been keeping it upstairs, unknown to any of us, for a week."

"Well, that shows you—"

"Shows you what?"

"That you can't keep a good man down. You shouldn't have given his dog away in the first place."

At any ordinary time Daisy Brenford would, at this point, have been so rightly irritated by her husband that she would have risen and left him. Now all was different. She was not irritated. She scarcely heard him. She was thinking of Gilbert.

Brenford looked at his wife, and she seemed to him a child like his other children. Although he had been married to her for so long, he had never realized that until now. He realized another thing—that through all these years, he had completely failed in his duty to her.

But he said easily: "I shouldn't worry about it, my dear. Let Gillie keep his dog. He'll be going back to

school soon. He's been unsettled by staying so long away. As to smacking him, that's what every mother does to her children sooner or later. He's a decent kid, really."

She began to cry. Tears rolled down her cheeks. She sobbed out uncertain words. "Those seagulls this morning—I thought they were threatening me. I've been thinking for years I'm a fine woman. And I'm not at all. I hadn't known—how much I loved you—you and the children. Nothing else matters."

She went over to him, knelt at his feet, came close to him. His pipe fell; he put his arms around her.

"Darling—don't cry. I've been to blame. I love you, too. We'll be all right. A new life. Oh, God, give us, through adversity, a new life!"

On the early afternoon of that same day May Vergil had stood at the door of her cottage watching three seagulls quarrel angrily over a small crust on her lawn. One of the gulls limped and was always late for the Fair. The other two, their prize divided between them, flew off with deep powerful drive of their wings.

"He's a prig and a hypocrite," she said, going back into the sitting-room, where Phyllis Larch was eating chocolates. She had been lunching with her friend.

"Who is?"

"A seagull with a lame leg—on the lawn."

May Vergil stopped opposite her friend and looked at her. She was fond of Phyllis.

"There's something I must know. I've been meaning to ask you if you know who it is."

"Who what is?"

"Ages ago. It was the Christmas party that the Corwells gave. It meant a lot to me, that party, because, although I didn't talk to them much, I got to like them both enormously that afternoon. They were so kind, so human. . . . They were what I wanted."

"He is."

"So is she. And although I've seen very little of them since, I've been conscious of them. They've changed me. I'm going up to London, Phil, and start something worth while. I'm sure a war's coming, and there'll be plenty to do."

"What!"

"Yes. High time I did. What I wanted to ask you was this: Celia Corwell told me one day that all her trouble with her husband began because someone at that party was cad enough to whisper in Corwell's ear that his wife was misbehaving with Jim Burfer. It was a woman."

"What a filthy thing to do!"

"Yes, wasn't it? Who do you think it could have been?"

"Alice Lamplough."

"I don't think it was."

"But it couldn't have been anyone else."

"It wasn't you, by any chance?"

"Me, May! Of all the rotten things!" She got up. "I'll never speak to you again for this."

"Swear to me it wasn't you—"

Phyllis broke in furiously: "I won't swear! You're bullying me, as you always do. I won't be bullied. I won't. I'll leave the house and never speak to you again."

"Then it *was* you!"

Phyllis sank down on the sofa and began to cry.

"I didn't mean to. . . . I said it before I knew what I was saying. I was in love with him. I am still. It was such a shame, that beastly woman carrying on with a servant. . . . Oh, May, you won't tell anyone, will you?"

"No, I won't tell anyone."

"I suppose you'll never speak to me again?"

"I'm not your friend any longer, if that's what you mean. And now you'd better go home."

"Yes I suppose I had. You promise not to tell anyone?"

"I promise."

Chapter Nineteen

THE relation between a man and woman who love one another is never static. When trouble comes, as it had come now with the Corwells, the movement is often so swift that, like a retiring army before a swiftly advancing enemy, the ground cannot be defended before it is lost.

So it was now with Celia Corwell. This was her first experience of love. She seemed to be fighting an enemy hooded and masked. This was no exaggerated metaphor. It really seemed to her that Julius was her enemy, and she could neither see him nor touch him. With every day's increasing hatred of him, she knew that she loved him more.

The only thing that she wanted in life was to reëstablish her relations with Julius. But for the first time in her relationship with any human being, she was baffled. With every hour the distance between them grew. Many times she was on the brink of going to him, taking his hand and saying:

"I am sorry. I have been to blame. Forgive me. Please, please forgive me."

It was his blindness that always stopped her. The full realization of the fear that had come upon her on that first drive into Garth was now fully realized. For his blindness was now entirely established. It was the mask that he was now wearing.

NOW came a fearful day—the third of March. When Celia woke, she heard every window of the house rattling, and every door. The rain beat on the house with a passion of curses. It was a nervous storm. At the moment of waking she felt it. She looked out from her window. The sky was leaden, and across the gray, white spumish clouds drove in fury. She turned back into the room, shivering. She felt so strong an apprehension that it was like an act challenging fate to put on her clothes. "Something will happen today. Before night something dreadful will have happened."

When she came into the dining-room, the fire was smoking.

"What a horrible day!" she said.

"Isn't it?" Julius smiled. "But it's March. We must expect it."

She wanted to say to him: "Do you feel this? Are you nervous as I am?" But he did not seem to be nervous. She said at last:

"I don't know what's the matter with me. I feel nervous and jumpy."

"That's the wind. It's a beastly wind. One of the drawbacks to this coast."

After breakfast she saw Mrs. Gayner, as usual. Mrs. Gayner was nervous too; but then, for a long time she had not been her quiet self.

"Mrs. Gayner, is there nothing we can do about these fires?"

"I'm afraid not. When the wind's this way, they always smoke."

"I'm a mass of nerves today—as though something were going to happen."

"I feel it myself, Mrs. Corwell. I always do when the wind's this way."

Celia was alone most of the day. No one came near her. She tried to write some letters, but abandoned the silly business. It was as though she had been placed out of contact with everyone else living. She felt such a despair as she had never before known. She looked in the mirror, and it seemed that she saw two figures there: one Celia behind another Celia, and the second Celia she had no mastery over. The second Celia might commit any folly, any madness.

As she went down the dark stairs, hearing the rain, like the loud snapping of fiddle-strings against the staircase window, she heard the second Celia say to the first Celia: "I must get out! I must get out!" And the first Celia answered: "Leave me alone! You are driving me to do something crazy."

During dinner she and Julius spoke very little. The curtains were drawn, the fire was not smoking; the storm now was like distant drums.

"I'm afraid I'm not very gay tonight," she said, smiling, and then remembered as she so often did, that he could not see her smile.

"A day like this is awfully tiring."

"Coffee, Julius?"

"Thank you. I'm just ready for it tonight." He crunched an apple with his teeth. His eyes closed for a moment as he drank his coffee.

"Do you mind if we have a little music?" he asked.

"Oh, no," she said, hating it. "The storm's worse than ever."

His broad back went over the gramophone. "Help me, my dear, will you? We'll have the Brahms Trio in E Flat

Major. You'll find it in the Brahms drawer. . . . Yes, that's the one."

One disk rattled down. The Scherzo began.

"I'm going to bed."

"Oh, just wait for the Ride to Hounds."

"No. I'm tired. This beastly day—"

"Good night, then."

"Good night."

On the stairs the storm raged about her. From some distant part of the house a door furiously banged.

Most unexpectedly she fell at once asleep. She was awaked by a sudden flinging open of a window because the catch had been snapped by the storm. Wind and rain poured in. She got up to close the window. She looked at her clock. It was a quarter past two. She saw that there was a little pool of water just below the ledge of the window, and as she stared at it, a frenzy of loneliness, unhappiness, terror seized her.

She could not stay here! She could not see Julius again. She dressed, and while she dressed she talked to herself.

"He plays music. He rides to hounds. He plays music. I'm so unhappy that I don't mind if the water does rise. And it's all about nothing. I love him, but I've lost him. I'm going away and never coming back."

She ran out of the house, and the wind knocked her back against the stone pillar of the steps. She ran crookedly through the streaming dark into the garage and got the small Austin. She drove out into the road with one window of the car wide open, and the rain slashed her in the face and the eyes.

She drove toward the Moor and Sizyn. She was going perhaps to London.

But she didn't go to London, for just above the Well Wood the car ran into a signpost and turned over. She climbed out and, through the storm, began to run. . . .

ALTHOUGH Celia did not know it, that had been also a terrible day for Julius. He too had felt the nervousness of the storm, the irritability that came from the ceaseless racket and driving hostility of the rain.

He reached, on that day, it seemed to him, the lowest depths of his own darkness. He had before experienced times when it was suggested to him, as though by an evil spirit, that man's whole trust in goodness was a fantasy. Throughout this day the belief had grown in him—strengthened by many weeks of unhappiness—that he had, his life long, not only been cheated, but wishfully had cheated himself. Another war was threatening the world and might soon be upon them all, with the added horrors of modern mechanism and science. There was no true evidence that there was a root of goodness in human life.

In the tiny figures of himself and Celia he saw the symbols of man's powerlessness. They had had everything on their side—good dispositions, wealth, health, love; and they had failed because they were not wise enough to trust and compromise their selfishness.

He was to blame. He had fallen, for so little a reason, into a slough of suspicion and jealousy.

After Celia had gone to bed, he sat there, unable to move, unable to think, so unhappy that it resembled an illness that had seized him. He sat on without moving. Two o'clock struck, but he did not hear it. He felt in his mouth and throat a loathsome taste, as though he had swallowed some evil thing. He thought that he would get a whisky and soda from the dining-room. He moved through the room, into the hall, and opened the dining-room door.

Then he stopped. Once again, as on that night in Celia's bedroom, he was aware that someone was there. He felt against the wall and switched on the light.

"Who's there?" he said.

A whining voice, crowded with terror, was revoltingly pleading.

"Oh, Mr. Corwell, please! Let me go. I didn't mean anything, truly I didn't. I came in for a drink. I—"

"Who are you?"

"You know me, Mr. Corwell. You've spoken to me once. Sharping's my name—Henry Sharping."

"What are you doing here?"

"I told you, Mr. Corwell. I slipped in for a drink."

"At *this* hour? What were you doing round here, anyway, in the middle of the night?"

"I'm walking around night-time, I am—really, Mr. Corwell. I'm like that. And I walked into your garden—"

But Julius had been passing his hand over the thin trembling body. From a pocket he drew out what he knew to be his two silver match-boxes and a small paper-knife that he knew—one of agate and gold.

"So you've been stealing things?"

There was no answer. The body trembled in his grasp like a bird's.

"Why? Why come here? Who *are* you?"

"He's my son, Mr. Corwell—more shame, be it said."

Mrs. Gayner was standing close beside him.

He drew her in, shutting the door behind him. "Quietly. I don't want to wake Mrs. Corwell." He had let the man go. "Now, Mrs. Gayner, what is all this?"

"This is my son, sir. He lives in the village and comes to see me at night. He's been doing it for a long time. Because he's a thief and no good, I've told nobody, and he's kept it dark too, living on another name. That's why I haven't told you and Mrs. Corwell."

"Ah!" Julius said. "That's what's been the matter with you!"

"Yes sir." Lizzie Gayner began to sob, little dry sobs like the rustling of twigs.

Julius said: "Come, Lizzie, sit down here beside me. Let me have my hand on yours. Your son can go. I'll do nothing about this."

"He's gone," she said quite simply. "He's like that."

"Why didn't you tell me long ago? Aren't we friends?"

"Of course, sir. But I was so afraid you'd send me away—and my heart's here. I couldn't live away from here, I think."

He felt her terror beating now in her breast. He touched for a moment the sleeve of her woolen dressing-gown.

"I would never have sent you away. How could you dream of it? But tell me about this dreadful boy of yours. Has he no profession—no trade?"

"Well sir, he was on the Halls—dancing and such; then when that failed, he came here where he knew I was. He had been a gentleman's servant, but lost that through stealing. I tried to get him abroad. But it was no use. He wouldn't go. And in a sort of way, I was glad he wouldn't. Although I've been in a terror and miserable of your knowing, I was comforted too, having him so close all these months."

"Why! Are you fond of him, after all he's done?"

"Fond of him! Oh, Mr. Corwell, he's all I've got! I love him, whatever he does, however he behaves. He's my son and my only one, and I'll never turn from him, whatever he may do."

At her words, a sudden longing for Celia sprang like a bright fire in Julius' heart. "A bright fire." It was like that. A quick illumination, shining, leaping, that will come to any man at any time about another human being. "Why have I been fooling like this, missing the true place, the right word, the only meeting?"

"I don't see how you can love him—"

"Loving has nothing to do with reason," Mrs. Gayner answered.

She got up. "I must go back to bed, sir. You've been most kind, and it's a great relief to me that you know now."

"Yes; but he can't stay here—in the village, I mean."

"No sir. Of course not."

"We'll manage something."

"Yes sir. Thank you, sir."

He stood up. "Lizzie, do you know something?"

"No sir. What, sir?"

"You're the best friend I have in the world."

"Oh, thank you, sir. But it isn't true. You have Mrs. Corwell."

"Yes. I have Mrs. Corwell. But as you say, that's different. That's love."

SHE had scarcely gone when the telephone-bell rang loud, insistent, as it is in the middle of the night. Julius went to it, and the voice at the other end was Jim Burfer's.

When he heard those very familiar soft tones, his whole body stiffened.

"Well?" he said.

"Oh, Mr. Corwell, is that you? I *am* glad I've got you. I'm at Raglan's Farm, near Sizyn."

"Well, well—what is it?"

"Mrs. Corwell is here—soaked through. She's ill. She's been wandering over the country."

The enemy, almost defeated, had one last thrust. She knew Burfer was there. She had gone to meet him. . . .

"Yes, Mr. Corwell. I've been working at Raglan's for the past week. Raglan found her in a swoon at the door. Mrs. Raglan put her to bed. I thought I should tell you, lest you should be anxious."

"I'll come at once."

Chapter Twenty

JULIUS roused Curtis. They went straight to the garage and got out the car.

He noticed that the storm had died away. A heavy blackness lay upon the earth, and a hushed stillness, as though the world were recovering itself after its whipping.

He did not think as they drove; he had a picture before him of Celia, wet, swooning, knocking on Raglan's door. He went into no question as to why she had gone, what had driven her to that. No thought as to her guilt or his—only a driving, all-possessing urgency to have her safe under his care.

Curtis drove the car into the yard. Julius jumped out and met Raglan at the door. Inside the kitchen Mrs. Raglan told him that they had given Mrs. Corwell a warm bath and put her to bed. She had been passive in their hands, as though she had been sleep-walking. She had said nothing at all, only shivered and turned her head from side to side. Now, they hoped, she was sleeping.

"I want to see her for a moment," Julius said, and an instant later he felt Burfer's hand on his arm, exactly as it had been so often at Garth.

"I left Curtis outside in the car," he said as they climbed the stair.

A door was opened, and then he heard Burfer cry out:

"She's gone!"

He clutched Burfer's arm.

"Gone!"

"Yes. She must have slipped out. There's the night-dress Mrs. Raglan lent her. She must have put on the wet clothes she'd been wearing."

"Quick!" He plunged blindly back into the passage. "Why didn't someone watch her? My God, anything may happen!" He would have fallen headlong down the crooked stair had not Burfer caught him around the waist.

"Steady! Steady now. Hold on to me. We'll find her! It's all right! Don't be disturbed, now. She can't have gone far."

Even at this moment he felt again Burfer's comradeship. There had never been any man he liked so much, nor anyone who knew so exactly what he was and how he was.

In the kitchen he heard the Raglans' exclamations, but didn't wait for them.

Raglan said: "Shall I come with you?"

"No. I'll take Burfer."

"I have a torch—a big one. It lights everything up."

"Give it to him, then."

With Burfer's arm through his he passed, almost running, through the yard, noticing neither the car nor Curtis.

They walked together like one man down the road that led to the moor. Burfer flashed the torch. Julius was in a fever. He clasped Burfer's arm and clenched it, stumbled in his eagerness, breathing as though he had run a distance.

"There! Jim, don't you hear something? A voice crying."

They stopped. Jim flashed his torch. There was a silence as though they were underground; and then, like a door opening, came the rhythm, an undertone, of the sea. The air was fresh and brilliant with the recent rain.

Julius suddenly called, "Celia! Celia!" and there was such a loving urgency in his voice, that Burfer, who also loved her, started as though it had been his own voice.

"Come on, man! Come on!" Julius cried, catching down at Burfer's warm dry hand. "What are you waiting for?" And he began to talk, with a wild incoherency and yet with purpose too.

"She'll be weak after that bath and the bed. She won't be able to go far. After all, she's only a child. I know you were in love with her, Jim. Maybe you still are. I don't care. All the world can love her. Everybody! Everybody! Because she loves me with all her heart and soul. Don't you see that she does? She wouldn't have run away and lost her head, else. She was desperate because she thought I didn't love her. I was jealous, Jim—jealous of you. I was in a black cloud of jealousy."

"I want to tell you, Mr. Corwell," Burfer said. "I want you to know that I would never have done her any harm. And she didn't care for me—not a jot or tittle. As you say, she is very young and I was mightily to blame. You don't know how I blame myself. Besides, there's never been a man in my life I've cared for as I have for you, Mr. Corwell. Only, I loved her and I do love her. I can't help that, can I? God knows I didn't want to. I'll never see her again after tonight, so there's nothing for you to worry over."

They stopped again. They were now in the middle of the moor, on the way toward Sizyn.

"I know!" Corwell cried. "I know where she will go. Come on, man—come on! Sizyn Church! We had a picnic there once—don't you remember—and she and I sat in the church, talking of ourselves. She'll remember that. She'll be there. Come on. Come on."

He dragged Burfer by the arm. "It's as though I could see," he said. "Everything. Every stone, every blade of grass. There's a light everywhere."

"That's the church," Burfer said. "We're almost onto it."

Corwell broke from him and ran, stumbling, forward, crying: "Celia! Celia!"

He was right. She was there, huddled up against the rough stone wall. How did he know? Burfer saw him stiffen, point forward with both hands like a dog, and then run straight forward. Mrs. Corwell was there, huddled up, her face turned toward the wall.

Burfer took a long look at the little form, shapeless, colorless in the moving dark, part of the wall, of the soil, of the sky. There was centered all that he loved in the world. All that he loved in that moment of time. There would be many other moments for him.

"Can I do anything, Mr. Corwell?" he asked.

There was no answer.

"Is there anything I can do?"

There was still no answer. So he shook his head like someone who suddenly and unexpectedly finds himself free. He stretched out his shoulders.

"So long, Mr. Corwell. So long, then."

He strode off, and never gave a look behind.

THE turf was sodden wet, but Julius gave no heed. He had taken Celia in his arms. She lay without moving, her eyes closed, her damp clenched hand unconsciously against his. A flood of words came from him.

"My darling, you shouldn't have done this. Running away! It wasn't kind. But it was all my fault. Mine—mine. All mine. And I've learned my lesson; I have indeed!"

She moved, raised her head and let it fall. Her action made him realize the sort of fool he was, pouring out sentimental nonsense and forgetting her state. He had been walking in a waterproof, and this he wrapped around her. He had brought brandy, and he forced some between her lips.

She swallowed it, but still lay, her eyes closed against his chest.

He stood up, holding her like a baby in his arms. He moved forward and came against the stone wall. Then he had an idea. He knew that the church was always open. The porch was to the left; he walked with careful steps, holding her carefully against him. He could not now stretch his hands out to guard himself, but it was true that he had a stronger sense of things in the dark than people who could see.

The little church was cold but not damp. It seemed to receive him friendlily. He felt the pew end and sat down. Then he took her and cradled her on the seat within his arm.

He sat there in silence. Her breath stroked his cheek. Her hand was in his. He was filled with unutterable love and gratitude.

She stirred, and took her hand from his. She sat up and said in the voice of a startled child: "Where am I? What is it?"

"We are in Sizyn Church," he said. "Just for a moment, resting before we go home."

"It's Julius."

"Yes. It's Julius."

She snatched herself from him. She tried to get up, but sat down again.

"But I'm not going home. I'm not going back."

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"I don't know, but I'm not going back." Again she tried to get up, and this time she succeeded. She would push past him, but with his hand at her breast he held her.

"Wait. Rest a little. Whatever else you do, rest a little now. Afterward you can do what you want."

"The car broke down, or I would be near London by now. I ran into a post."

"Never mind about the post. How do you feel?"

"Rotten."

"Will you have some more brandy?"

"No. I'd be sick. I have a dreadful headache."

She put her hand to her head like a child. He could not see that. He knew it was better for the moment not to touch her, so he sat apart.

"Why are you running away like this?" he asked her.

"Because I hate you, and I hate Garth and everyone in it."

"Were you hurt when the car hit the post?"

"No, I don't think so." Then she asked again: "Where are we?"

"In Sizyn Church."

"What time is it?"

"I don't know. It will be dawn soon." He waited, and then added very gently:

"I have the other car at Raglan Farm. Won't you come back to Garth for an hour or two and rest? Then you can go back to London if you want to."

"No. No. No."

"Very well, then."

After a silence she began in a trembling voice:

"Why did you come after me? Why can't you leave me alone?"

"You're my wife. I love you."

There was silence again.

He reached out and took her hand. She didn't resist.

"Listen, my darling: You're as free as air. You need never see me again if you don't want to, although I shall be very unhappy if that's so. But I want you to understand this: It's all my fault. I was jealous and couldn't put myself out of it. I couldn't speak. I wanted to, but I couldn't. And then, when I knew you'd run away, it all cleared. In a moment I cared for nothing in the world but you, and so I always will."

Her fingers stirred a little in his hand.

"How did you know I had gone away?"

"Jim Burfer telephoned from the Raglans'."

"Was Jim Burfer there?"

"Yes. Didn't you know?"

"I don't remember anything." Her voice was infinitely weary.

"You're terribly tired. Please, please, Celia, come back to Garth for a little."

"No. No. I'll never go back to Garth."

"Why do you hate it so?"

"I've been so unhappy there."

"Will you come to the car at Raglans', then, and Curtis shall go back and fetch some things."

"No. I like it here. Although the seat's very hard."

HE took off his coat and spread it under her. To his surprise and joy, she allowed him to do this, and even once more lay back against him. He thought she was falling asleep, but she said:

"We don't love one another any more. Why do we pretend? Our marriage has been a dreadful failure."

"I don't think it has," he said quietly.

"You thought I could be unfaithful to you. At the first chance you thought it."

"I was jealous. Most men are, sometime or other, when they love a person."

She sat up, shaking her head. He felt that she had some of her real vigor again. Her voice was stronger.

"No. We aren't suited. That's the trouble, Julius. We aren't suited."

"Don't you love me any more, then?"

She didn't answer. Instead, she gave a little cry:

"Oh, the light's coming in! The church is waking."

She stared at the trembling gray color that began to wash the walls of the little church. It was going to be a lovely, glorious day. The window seemed to move forward toward her, the hawthorn blossom, the monk, the donkey with his silver bell. The sun was not up yet, but everything was preparing for its rising.

"Look, Julius. The sun is coming. . . . Forgive me. I had forgotten. Oh, you look so tired!"

Then she threw herself on his breast. She drew his head against her cheek. She kissed his eyes, his mouth.

"I love you! Of course I love you! I've never stopped for a single moment! But you were angry, and you didn't trust me any more, and they all hated me. Julius, hold me close. Not now only. Always. Let me never be alone again. I'm not strong enough. Darling Julius. Darling, darling Julius."

He held her in his arms against his breast. His blind eyes looked out, over her body, to the window. He felt the light warm upon his face.

Chapter Twenty-one

From Julius' Journal

I HAVE perhaps found nothing stranger in this life than the way in which the past huddles back into the past—not only huddles but rushes back the moment it *is* the past, flings itself onto the general dust-heap and becomes nothing but waste.

I love Celia. And yet a short time ago, in that rubbish-heap past, I was hidden from her by the ignominy of that battle between the jealous animal in me and the seeing spirit. Had I lost her—as I so nearly did—how many others, how much good life, would have been lost with her!

I am going to take her with me. We are going traveling—to Greece, perhaps—somewhere, and she will tell me of the beauties that I can't see, and I will let her go with the handsomest traveler in the Seven Seas and never know a tremor.

But for a moment, to be practical, I am haunted by the three Brenford children. Not by their actual presence, for only Simon has been here, but by the constant pricking sense that I owe them something. I would love to have a child of my own, and still may, thank God.

The Brenfords have given a farewell tea-party for Celia and me. It was an odd experience. I wrote the other day in this book something about the creative things being the only things that remain. I see Hitler's bogey sort of power and cleverness. He'll bring tremendous ruin with him before he finishes. But it is all destructive. The idea of Nazi Germany ruling the world has neither bigness nor spiritual grandeur enough. So it must ultimately fail. . . .

All this big stuff comes down to a little tiny scene—to wit—the tea-party for us at the Vicarage. My point is that for me it was a created moment which will, as long as I am alive, outlast all the Hitlers. A creative moment for me indeed, for it seemed to me that I myself had created everybody present! I was, I must confess radiantly happy.

Such a capacity for happiness have Celia and I! And yet we permitted ourselves for weeks the most desperate miseries.

She has told me how, when she left the house that night, she was *mad* with unhappiness. When the car hit the post, she remembers thinking, "I hope that's killed me," and after that, she was really crazy, feeling that she had lost not only me but all life. She wanted to die.

And when she ran away from the Raglans, she had a knife with her and meant to kill herself at Sizyn Church, and fell asleep instead!

All incredible nonsense to her as she lay in my arms last night. A brainstorm, you call it. But it wasn't. It was simply that we both lost contact. Not only with one another, but the central force of life—call it God or what you will. To that, I know now, we must always hold. All of us.

The last thing I meant, though, here, was to indulge in amateur metaphysics. The grandiloquent point I want-

ed to make was that everyone at the Brenford tea-party—Dorothy, Gilbert, Simon, Mr. and Mrs. B., the Lamploughs, silly Fred Ironing, the two old girls Phyllis Larch and May Vergil—seemed to belong to me, to have been created by me. Only Mrs. Mark who was created by the house I now own, didn't belong to me. A fantasy. I had never seen any of them. I had my own idea of them from their voices, their scents, the things they said.

DOROTHY BRENFORD, for instance: "What I really want now, Mr. Corwell, is to learn typewriting. I must *do* something, mustn't I?"

Gilbert: "Do you think, Mr. Corwell, when I go back to school, they'd let someone in Polchester teach me carving?"

Simon: "I don't want you to go away."

Mrs. Brenford: "I'm very happy, Mr. Corwell, and it's all due to you." (What she meant, I haven't the least idea!)

That silly girl, Miss Larch: "I want to make a confession, Mr. Corwell. It was I—"

But I stopped her: "No confessions. I'm a conjurer. I can make my rabbits tell me everything."

I knew she was staring at me and her mouth was open. Her breath smelled of peppermint.

"I believe you can, Mr. Corwell."

And Miss Vergil: "My gratitude to you for releasing me from a ridiculous uselessness."

And old Lamplough, taking me by the arm to the window: "I've told my wife everything, Julius. Not what a mean common gossip she is, but of that night when I was with you and the stars blazed. You couldn't see them, but you *felt* them; and I told her what a poor pair of mortals we were and that we stayed together simply because no one else would have us, and that one day the stars would blaze again and she'd go out like a two-penny dip."

"And what did she say?"

"She said she was a virtuous woman, far too good for an old horror like me. But I frightened her. Thanks to you, Julius, she'll always be a little bit frightened now before she dies."

"Why to me?"

"Because she thinks you're even better than she is at knowing what's going on. She thinks you have unholy powers, Julius."

And lastly, Brenford himself:

"You know, Corwell, it's an awful thing to believe in God and not do a thing about it. All right if you don't believe. But if you do—I've been blind for years—another kind of blindness from yours."

I wanted to get away then. My illusion of grandeur was over. I had created nothing. We were all only half-made, and there is every kind of thing still to be done.

Sometimes I can frighten people. Why, I cannot imagine. On this occasion it has been useful, for I understand that the loathsome Henry Sharping left London yesterday morning for the West Indies. I was in his company once more for five minutes before he left this place. His mother was with him.

"I always knew you could see in the dark," he said.

But what I want to put down here is the love of Mrs. Gayner. Simply to record it so that if a day may once again come when I am false in my heart to Celia, I may remember this page. For it was Mrs. Gayner's word that night about her horrible son that saved me. For me, as I suppose for most men, there must be an element of admiration in my love—there must be something for me to admire. Not so with the best women. The more despicable the object, the more faithful the love. . . .

In two days we shall be gone. Mrs. Mark came to say good-by. I told her to come here whenever she wished. But she laughed and said she wouldn't dare.

"It's the funniest thing: You can't go back! For months I've been sentimental about this house, but I've begun a new life, and the two lives don't join. There isn't in fact, any of the old life left. You killed the ghosts, if there ever were any. I've got Dorothy Brenford to be fond of, and my cottage, and there's a war coming. And you'll be back in three months. No, the present's the thing."

But to me, although I didn't tell her so, she's herself something of a ghost. And at the top of the stairs in this house, I see her looking down, a charming girl, watching for her lover. Her real life now is in Dorothy, who herself will only realize that, years and years later, when she looks back and understands what once she was given but didn't know it. . . .

The last night—the last evening. When, in half an hour's time I close this book, I leave it in its rather priggish honesty for three months' seclusion. I sha'n't take it with me.

Celia came in, a little frightened. She had nearly fallen into the old Italian chest in the hall, looking down into it for some handkerchiefs, nearly overbalanced and fallen in. "And then the lid comes down on you, and nobody can find you, and you choke and die."

She was frightened, and I had to console her. Hadn't all our trouble been that I had never realized the child she was and is?

I have her now inside my heart to protect and guard. At least I have learned this lesson of our interdependence. The lesson that all mankind now must learn: The twin lessons of interdependence and charity.

SUNDAY morning, and the village of Garth-in-Roselands is as still and lifeless as the remotest crater of the farthest of the dead moons. The sea mist has writhed its way across the fields, through the Sunday morning houses across the village green, where its watery web moistens the wings of the limping seagull, now the pampered petted mascot of the village.

Three children stand just inside the Vicarage gate, waiting. On the other side of the green, poker-stiff in her neat manly jacket and shirt, the brass buttons of the waistcoat damped by the mist, the gayly colored fishing-fly jaunty in her hat, a lady stands.

A motor-car appears. The children wave. It is gone.

Two of the children turn slowly into the house. But the smallest of them comes out of the gate and stares down the road.

The lady with the brass buttons on her waistcoat also stands there staring.

THE END

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